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# Painting the town red, Liverpool's week in Melbourne.

By Joshua Hercus

One of the giants of English and world football arrived in Melbourne on July 21st to an unbelievable welcome in preparation for their friendly against Melbourne Victory on Wednesday July 24th. The trip however was much more than just the one off match but was rather a symbol of the growth of the Australian sporting public's embracing of the world game and all it has to offer.

Liverpool like fellow premier league rival Manchester United who had previously done so shortly before hand in Sydney provide a once in a lifetime fan experience.

The truth is only after thinking back on it now a few months down the road the match while an un-

doubted a highlight only tells part of the story with their being many more experiences of Liverpool FC painting the town red.

My journey starts from a couple of hours north of Melbourne in a town of Bendigo where I reside which on Sunday July 21st I made my way down to Melbourne. Even at the train station wearing my Liverpool jersey, for the first time in this country town I was being asked if I was going to the match and details on players from those who were much more familiar with the oval ball code I could certainly see there was something different in the air that day.

Arriving at the Windsor in Melbourne my hotel for this magnificent week I passed the Imperial Hotel which is the home of Melbourne Liverpool Supporters Association where a huge This Is Melbourne recreated in the image

This Anfield sign adorned one side of the building.

My first night was truly about having a real sense of the Liverpool culture with the Portland Hotel providing a live session of cult podcast The Anfield Wrap. In a room full of over 200 Liverpool fanatics we were greeted by being engaged with football insights and the famous Scouse wit. Red Touch Media who made the event possible were even able to bring on along the famous Liverpool sound with Silent Sleep playing an amazing acoustic set. The combination of Scouse and Australian culture melting together was highlighted by the extremely intelligent and former Liverpool player Craig Johnston reflecting on his time at the club as well as his views on the club going forward with the hope of returning to former glory.

The next night it was off to the Imperial Hotel for a once in a lifetime chance to have a Q and A with club legends Robbie Fowler and Ian Rush which was set up by the club in conjunction with the MLSA who both have to be congratulated on a wonderful night. Apart from the chance to see my idol growing up Robbie Fowler the night also highlighted the commitment from Liverpool to embrace the Melbourne community by using the chance to help promote local charities and assist them. It was also the chance to have over seven long years hard work by the MLSA committee including Tony Papa, Anthony Dinoto, Adam McVeigh, Jai Rankine and Luke Cassetta having the supporters club officially recognized by the club.

The Tuesday was spent back at the Imperial with plenty of banter and

strengthening of lifelong friendships which has continued out on facebook and twitter as the season progressed.

The highlight of the Tuesday night was the training session at Etihad Stadium where over 20,000 turned up and sang providing a match like atmosphere.

Then the big day came where over 95,000 supporters witnessed Liverpool play in the flesh for the first time for many of those.

The start to the night was the rousing rendition of You'll Never Walk Alone which would rival any of the big nights Liverpool has played in.

A strong Liverpool performance was highlighted in the first half by a fantastic Steven Gerrard strike with the captain and leader of the club celebrating the goal in a manner befitting how the city of Melbourne had embraced Liver-

pool Football Club.

The second half so the introduction of the maverick and star player Luis Suarez resulted in the second goal to Iago Aspas to round of a regulation 2 nil win and provide hopes for many Liverpool supporters that this could certainly be a season to remember.

The Thursday was spent recapping the highlights of the trip and seeing the players off for their rest of their Asian tour while one lucky MLSA member received an extra special memory for the trip in Nikki Velksoka meeting her hero Daniel Agger who signed her ribs which has now been permanently tattooed as a reminder of trip when we catch at the Imperial to watch the games and reminisce of the Liverpool Football Club painted the town red.

Photos  
ROMEL AMERIKHAS



Reds on Tour

Liverpool FC and Melbourne Victory take centre stage at the MCG.

Reds captain Steven Gerard with a Melbourne momento.

LFC manager Brendan Rodgers with Victorian Premier Denis P. Napthine and Victory CEO Anthony Di Pietro.

The Kop make themselves at home at the 'G.'



**Mulching  
in  
Melbourne**

Zee Ko

It's started with a flurry, beginning with the well-attended A-League launch at AAMI Park on Tuesday, the first of many scheduled media opportunities this week.

A sheepish Connor Pain failed to get the better of the Old Xaverians State League Div. 5 Reserves goalkeeper and finished dead last in the strange penalty shootout that had been arranged for the cameras. Archie Thompson gave a Gallic shrug and then glanced sheepishly at his young teammate, as Adelaide clinched the first trophy of the season – one that Simon Hill gleefully announced was made of pure solid plastic gold.

Well, at least they didn't finish below Melbourne Heart. Oh wait they did, as a gleeful Patrick Kisnorbo was happy to remind them repeatedly.

But of course the real contest is this Saturday when the two Melbourne teams clash yet again in a battle of the titanic A-League clubs, drawing a capacity crowd to the Etihad Stadium as the world's premier football competition gets underway again. It's not exactly accurate but you get my drift as A-League fans in Melbourne dust off their replica jerseys and supporter scarves and prepare for the biggest event in their football calendar. There've been plenty of talking points even before the action

# Let the fun and games begin!



## THE BIG KICK-OFF

begins, from the fans in the stands to a former marquee player turned opposition skipper. The row over supporter active areas and security measures threaten to overshadow Harry Kewell's return as the new Melbourne Heart captain, as the Red and Whites promise to do better in coach John Aloisi's second season.

What else could go wrong? Plenty already has, as marquee man Orlando Engelaar broke his leg in his first friendly appearance against Brisbane Roar, such a massive blow that Heart immediately wrapped Kewell and fellow signing Michael Mifsud in cotton wool. The two would not see any action before the season started proper, as their team continued its sorry record of losing to A-League opposition in preseason for a fourth year running.

Things are a bit better at Melbourne Victory, as Ange Postecoglou begins his own second year in charge. The deadwood's been cleared out, and the new signings looked to have been handpicked this time rather than inherited



from the previous management. Postecoglou's tenure began with a disheartening (pun unintended) loss to his crosstown rivals last year, and although it proved a blip in the end, you get the feeling that a repeat will not be tolerated. It's been interesting on the youth side of things too, as Heart have stolen a march on their rivals by announcing their preliminary National Youth League team, and including last year's Victory youth captain Luke O'Dea in it. The youngster made his debut for the Victory senior team last season as part of Postecoglou's youth revolution, and will no doubt be seen as a coup by fans. He's not the only player to cross battle lines though, as he's joined by former Victory youth teammates Paulo

Retre and Hernan Espindola. Victory have yet to announce their own provisional squad, but like at Heart, there'll be plenty of interest from fans. Who's going to be the next Andrew Nabbout and Connor Pain, or Jeremy Walker and Sam Mitchell? The next A-League superstar could be right there in those team lists, you never know. Moving on, another team yet to announce a squad is the Melbourne Victory Women's team at the time of going to press, but with the W-League season only beginning in November there's no reason to panic. With any luck, the contracts should be sorted by this weekend though there have already been several interesting developments. Victory Medal winner Petra Larsson is unlikely to re-

turn this season from Sweden, but fans could be cheered up by news that New Zealand international defender Rebekah Stott is on her way back from a playing stint in Germany. With new coach David Edmonson at the helm, the team will hope to replicate the form that saw them make their first ever Grand Final last season. But enough talk already, the weekend's on us and if you're reading this you'll probably be on your way to your seat now before the game. Whether you're decked in navy blue or red and white (or even in sky blue god forbid), it's time to buckle your seatbelts and prepare for an exhilarating ride into the unknown. Welcome back football, we've missed you.

## A-LEAGUE GLOBAL BROADCAST RIGHTS DEAL EXTENDED

**Football Federation Australia (FFA) has extended World Sport Group's (WSG) agreement to represent the worldwide (excluding Australia and Oceania) broadcast rights for the Hyundai A-League, for a further four years, until the end of the 2016/17 season.**

The new agreement also coincides with the news that, WSG has signed agreements with BT Vision (replacing BSkyB) to show at least two matches each week in the UK and extended their agreement with Mediaset to show all Sydney FC matches in Italy for the Hyundai A-League 2013/14 season.

FFA CEO David Gallop said continuing the relationship with WSG to sell the international broadcast rights will greatly increase the exposure to Australian football and will benefit both the league and the national team.

"We have had a long and productive history working with WSG and we look forward to continuing this relationship and developing further broadcast opportunities internationally for the promotion and visibility of Australian football," said Gallop.

"The Hyundai A-League is a hugely popular asset internationally not only for expat Australian's whose emails we receive on a weekly basis

but also new fans turning their attention to the league.

"Last year's arrival of Alessandro Del Piero, Shinji Ono and Emile Heskey has already seen the visibility of our game grow at an international level – with this new agreement in place the Hyundai A-League now has a potential audience in the tens of millions internationally."

In addition to the Hyundai A-League, the FFA has also extended

a broad international audience is essential to our development as a nation and solidifying our prominence in Asia."

Based out of Singapore, WSG has been an FFA sales partner since 2005.

"We are pleased to extend our partnership with Football Federation Australia for a further four years," said James Clarke, Senior Vice President, Content at World Sport

million. Broadcasters who aired the matches included Mediaset Premium Calcio in Italy, BSkyB in the United Kingdom, Fox Sports and One World Sports in the USA, TV Asahi and NHK in Japan, i-Cable in Hong Kong, Astro in Malaysia, Starhub in Singapore and Guangdong TV in China.

"In the new cycle we're looking to extend the platform further to more broadcasters in Asia, where

Australian football is increasingly important, and also to broadcasters in English-speaking countries which have an affinity with Australia," Clarke said. "We are also looking to grow the league's distribution in southern and eastern Europe; regions with large migrant and expatriate populations in Australia.

Additionally, in partnership with Perform, the digital rights group, WSG will also stream every match played in the Hyundai A-League worldwide (subject to geoblocking in selected territories) on www.aleague.livesport.tv. WSG will support the league broadcasts on online and social media including YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter.

### Hyundai A-league International Broadcasters:

Territory	Broadcaster	Live Matches	Highlights Show
Global Broadband	Perform	Yes (5)	No
Hong Kong	I-Cable	Yes (2)	Yes
Singapore	Starhub	Yes (4)	Yes
Malaysia	Astro	No	Yes
Myanmar	STLM	Yes (1)	Yes
USA	fox Sports 2 / Fox Soccer Plus	Yes (1)	Yes
USA	One World Sport	Yes (up to 4)	Yes
Italy	Mediaset	Yes (1)	Yes
UK	BT	Yes (2)	Yes

WSG's agreement to sell the broadcast rights to the Australian senior men's national team matches.

"Following qualification for our third successive FIFA World Cup the Socceroos prominence on the international stage continues to grow," continued Gallop.

"We have some fantastic fixtures in the planning as we head into the 2014 FIFA World Cup and ensuring these matches are available to

Group. "The Hyundai A-League is one of Asia's leading leagues and together with FFA, we have been able to build a strong broadcast platform for the competition across Asia and around the world over the past few years."

Matches from the Hyundai A-League 2012/13 season were televised in major markets worldwide with a potential reach of nearly 90

## Every Hyundai

### A-League match live

on ABC Radio

Football Federation Australia (FFA) has announced that every Hyundai A-League match in the 2013/14 Season will have live coverage on ABC Radio platforms.

Under the historic four-year agreement, all 127 Regular Season matches and five Finals Series matches this season will have start-to-finish, uninterrupted live commentary.

FFA CEO David Gallop hailed the new agreement as another sign of football's breakthrough into the mainstream of Australian society. "Live sports on ABC Radio have long been a staple of Australian life and I'm delighted that hundreds of hours of A-League action will be on the radio this season," said Gallop.

"The national radio broadcaster adds significantly to our reach at a time when audiences for the A-League are booming and there's a massive surge in interest in football."

"The ABC is a great supporter of the game, including the live TV coverage of the Westfield W-League, and I know the new partnership will be a major boost to our growth story."

ABC Radio has broadcast Socceroos FIFA World Cup qualifiers and major internationals over the past 30 years and coverage of the Hyundai A-League has grown steadily since the league's inception in 2005.

"The ABC looks forward to taking our partnership with the FFA to a whole new level," said Kate Dundas, Director ABC Radio.

"Under a new four year agreement we have committed to call each game of A-League football live via the ABC Radio mobile App and online streaming via the Grandstand website."

"After such a stellar 2012 season, we're confident this significant investment will help grow the A-League and deliver a great game to new audiences across the country."

ABC Radio will also broadcast matches on ABC Local Radio and on Grandstand Digital Radio.

### ROUND ONE ON ABC RADIO

#### Sydney FC V Newcastle Jets

702 ABC Sydney/ 1233 ABC Newcastle

#### Central Coast V Western Sydney

ABC Central Coast 92.5/702 ABC Sydney

#### Melb Victory V Melb Heart

774 ABC Melbourne

#### Wellington Phoenix V Bris Roar

NZ/612 ABC Brisbane

#### Adelaide United V Perth Glory

720 ABC Perth /891 ABC Adelaide



# GOAL WEEKLY

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# SCOREBOARD

## 2012/13 Final Standings

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 West Sydney Wanderers	27	18	3	6	41	21	20	57
2 Central Coast Mariners	27	16	6	5	48	22	26	54
3 Melbourne Victory	27	13	5	9	48	45	3	44
4 Adelaide United	27	12	5	10	38	37	1	41
5 Brisbane Roar	27	10	5	12	33	29	4	35
6 Perth Glory	27	9	5	13	29	31	-2	32
7 Sydney FC	27	9	5	13	41	51	-10	32
8 Newcastle Jets	27	8	7	12	30	45	-15	31
9 Melbourne Heart	27	8	3	16	31	40	-9	27
10 Wellington Phoenix	27	7	6	14	31	49	-18	27

## THIS WEEK

Round 1	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Oct 11	Sydney FC - Newcastle Jets	Allianz Stadium	4:30 PM	5:00 PM
Sat Oct 12	CC Mariners v West Sydney Wanderers	Bluetongue Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Oct 12	Melbourne Victory v Melbourne Heart	Etihad Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Oct 13	Wellington Phoenix v Brisbane Roar	Westpac Stadium	5:00 PM	3:00 PM
Sun Oct 13	Adelaide United v Perth Glory	Coopers stadium	2:00 PM	5:00 PM

Round 2	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Oct 18	Adelaide United v Melbourne Victory	Hindmarsh Stadium	7:00 PM	7:30 PM
Sat Oct 19	Melbourne Heart v Central Coast Mariners	AAMI Park	5:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Oct 19	Brisbane Roar v Sydney FC	Suncorp Stadium	6:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Oct 20	Newcastle Jets v Perth Glory	Hunter Stadium	3:00 PM	3:00 PM
Sun Oct 20	West Sydney Wanderers v Wellington Phoenix	Parramatta Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM

## NEXT WEEK

## Finals Series

### Elimination Finals

Melbourne Victory 2  
Perth Glory 1 (aet)

Adelaide United 1

Brisbane Roar 2

### Semi Finals

Western Sydney Wanderers 2  
Brisbane Roar 0

Central Coast Mariners 1  
Melbourne Victory 0

### Grand Final

Western Sydney Wanderers 0  
Central Coast Mariners 2

### Champions

Central Coast Mariners

### Premiers Plate Winners

Western Sydney Wanderers

### Johnny Warren Medal

Marco Rojas, Melb Victory

### NAB Young Footballer of the Year

Marco Rojas, Melb Victory

### Nike Golden Boot Award

Daniel McBreen, Central Coast Mariners, 17 Goals

### Goalkeeper of the Year

Ante Covic, Western Sydney Wanderers

### Manager of the Year

Tony Popovic, Western Sydney

## TOP GOAL SCORERS

17 - Daniel McBREEN (Mariners)

16 - Jeremy BROCKIE (Phoenix)

15 - Marco ROJAS (Victory)

14 - Besart BERISHA (Roar)

Alessandro DEL PIERO (SFC)

9 - Emile HESKEY (Jets)

Ryan GRIFFITHS (Jets)

Mark BRIDGE (Wanderers)

Dario VIDOSIC (Adelaide)

8 - Mark MILLIGAN (Victory)

Archie Thompson (Victory)



Daniel McBreen had a blinding season in front of goals and secured the 2012/13 Golden Boot with total of 17 goals.

## A-LEAGUE TEAM OF THE SEASON 2012/13

Compiled by Steven Talevski

After 125 league games and five finals in season eight of the Hyundai A-League, over 100 players earned at least one spot in Goal! Weekly's series of team of the weeks.

That number has been dramatically cut down to 11 to make our team of the season managed by the coach who earned the most coach of the weeks.

**GK: Ante Covic** – Only named three times in Goal! Weekly's team of the week, Covic was the pick of the bunch in the goalkeeping department this season with players such as Mat Ryan and Eugene Galekovic also being named multiple times. Covic played all 29 games this season for the Wanderers, keeping 11 clean sheets as the Wanderers conceded an A-League low of 21 goals during the regular season.

**RB: Jerome Polenz** – The former German youth international came to the Wanderers at the beginning of the season and took his spot in the first eleven over the clubs vice-captain Tarek Elrich. Polenz was an instrumental part of the Western Sydney defence which was arguably the A-Leagues best.

On an individual basis Polenz earned four spots in our team of the weeks and was named star man in round 21 when his side handed Melbourne Victory their first defeat at AAMI Park for the season.

**CB: Trent Sainsbury** – With the departure of former club captain Alex Wilkinson, Sainsbury earned an opportunity to fill the whole in the Mariners defence. Sainsbury took the opportunity with both hands as the Central Coast kept the most clean sheets this season.

Sainsbury was named the equal most of any player in our team of the weeks and even earned himself the star man award for his defensive display against Perth Glory in round 2.

Playing the majority of the season in the centre of defence, Sainsbury was able to catch the eye of many in the stands leaving him with a potential move overseas as a real possibility.

**CB: Nikolai Topor-Stanley** – Now at his fourth club in the A-League, Topor-Stanley had his best season to date which saw pundits call for his inclusion in several Socceroos squads.

Often regarded with great potential, Topor-Stanley finally fulfilled them this season as the 27 year old partnered Michael Beauchamp in the centre of the Wanderers defence to create solid wall in front of goalkeeper of the season, Ante Covic.

On a personal note, Topor-Stanley was able to play in his first A-League Grand Final and also claimed his first Minor Premiership.



Marcos Rojas set the league alight last season before heading to Europe.

crucial member in the Mariners Championship winning squad.

**RAM: Dario Vidosic** – Adelaide's number 10 was there top goal scorer this season finding the back of the net 10 times. Vidosic had a fantastic season and was one of the particular reasons why Adelaide was near the top of the table early in the season before consolidating fourth spot.

**CAM: Alessandro Del Piero** – He came here to win titles, but ultimately failed to make finals. However it was nowhere near a failure of a season for the marquee man who took Sydney FC within a game of the final series.

On a personal note Del Piero had a superb season scoring 14 goals in 24 games along with bringing in fans across every corner of the nation through the turnstiles.

A second season awaits for 'El Capitano' in the A-League with Sydney FC fans hoping that his team mates can lift there game so that we see him in the finals series next season.

**LAM: Marco Rojas** – The Johnny Warren Medallist was a clear standout this season winning the award by doubling the votes of runner up Alessandro Del Piero.

Rojas had a breakout season scoring 15 goals after only scoring two during his stint at Wellington. Rojas was also the only man to be named Goal! Weekly star man of the week more than once this season.

With Rojas announcing he was set to leave the Melbourne Victory, this may be the last time we see the #KiwiMessi in the A-League.

**ST: Daniel McBreen** – Like a fine wine that gets better with age, Daniel McBreen has had a standout season helping the Mariners claim their first Championship after three losing Grand Finals. However the accolades do not end there as McBreen was awarded the Joe Marston Medal for the man of the match award in the Grand Final along with the Golden Boot for the A-Leagues top goal scorer which he achieved with 17 goals.

**Coach: Tony Popovic** – After the Grand Final victory of Graham Arnold, I was left perplexed with whom to name Goal! Weekly's coach of the year.

However with Tony Popovic claiming nine coach of the weeks, building a team off by scratch, claiming the Minor Premiership and a spot in the Grand Final, there was no looking past Popovic's achievements.

Popovic was superb this season, building a team with a strong core in defence and adding attacking flair to see the Wanderers capture the hearts of Western Sydney residents.

Honourable mentions: Matt Ryan, Ivan Franjic, Michael Beauchamp, Shinji Ono, Youssouf Hersi and Jeremy Brockie.

## The Squad

1.Eugene Galekovic	GK
3.Nigel Boogaard	D
4.Jon McKain	D
5.Osama Malik	M
6.Cassio	D
7.Jeronimo Neumann	F
8.Isaias	M
9.Sergio Cirio	F
10.Marcelo Carrusca	M
11.Bruce Djite	F
12.Antony Golec	D
13.Steve Lustica	M
14.Cameron Watson	M
15.Jacob Mellings	M
16.Daniel Bowles	D
17.Awer Mabil	M
18.Michael Zullo	D
19.Jake Barker-Daish	M
20.Paul Izzo	GK
21.Tarek Elrich	D
22.Fabio Ferreira	M
23.Jordan Elsey	D
24.Brent McGrath	F

Teeboy Kamara is currently on the long term injury list.

**Ins:**  
Sergio Cirio (Hospitalet, Spain)  
Tarek Elrich (Wanderers)  
Jordan Elsey (AUFC Youth Team)  
Steven Lustica (Hajduk Split, Croatia)  
Awer Mabil (AUFC Youth Team)  
Isaias Sanchez (Ponferradina, Spain)  
Michael Zullo (FC Utrecht, Holland)  
Brent McGrath (Brondby, Denmark) – short term contract

**Outs:**  
Iain Fyfe (Mes Kerman, Iran),  
Dario Vidosic (Sion, Switzerland),  
Fabian Barbiero, Evan Kostopoulos.

# Spanish Inquisition arrives in SA

## Adelaide United



By Matt Mays

A new look Adelaide United hopes to celebrate their 10 year birthday this A-League season with a bit of Spanish flavour as ex Barcelona youth coach Josep Gombau comes to town.

It's fair to say last season was one to forget if you are a Red. It was a season of ups, but mostly downs. United started the year in red hot form but the troubles behind the scenes took its toll on John Kosmina who walked out of the club, leaving the Red's slumping to 2 wins in their last 10 games and a mediocre 4th placed finish. Soccerco Vidosic then followed with a return to Europe (FC Sion, Switzerland), Ian Ramsey (Melbourne Heart), and Iain Fyfe (Mes Kerman, Iran).

But the upcoming season is a fresh new start; new stadium ownership, as the Adelaide Entertainment Centre hopes to revamp the facilities at Hindmarsh, which will be now known as Coopers Stadium once again; new continental styled management team, with Josep Gambou bringing in his assistant, Pau Marti, where they both performed excellently in Asia with Kitchee FC; and new look experiences players into



Coach Josep Gombau arrives in Adelaide via Barcelona. Photo: ROMEL AMERIKHAS

the fold.

Josep has previously worked in Spain in the Barcelona Youth set up, and is slowly building a reputation of wanting to play attractive, passing football. In pre-season after Adelaide dismantled a state team 11-0, he stated his disappointment about the teams' ball retention, which makes things clear he is not just after goals. Josep brings with him two fellow Catalans; Sergio Cirio and Isaias Sanchez, who join an already stacked Latino line up including Ferreira, Cassio, Neumann and Carrusca. Also coming into the fold is some much needed experience, as Michael Zullo comes home from a decent spell in the Eredivisie with FC Utrecht as cover for the absent Ramsey. WSW vice-captain Tarek Elrich also has been snapped up by the Reds, which sees Tomi Jurich going the



New arrivals: Isaias Sanchez and Tarek Elrich will hope to settle quickly at Coopers Stadium.

other way back to Western Sydney. Steven Lustica from Brisbane has also been added for some much needed A League knowledge.

Looking at the squad this year and you see a good balance of home growth and continental. The real test for the new boss is how he is going to get the team to integrate on the pitch. It's a tough ask, especially with some language barriers, but his recent record suggests that Josep could be the man to make Adelaide United some stability it has been lacking in recent seasons. Rumours of board fall outs and lack of organisation off the pitch where confirmed after Aussie favourite Craig Foster resigned from the Reds management voting panel back in April after "undertakings that were given were, within days, not honoured."

But to be fair to Adelaide, this

summer has proven to be a constructive one off. The club recently securing a permanent training facility deal at West Lakes, along with a fresh new shirt sponsorship deal with Veolia. The club has also worked well to please fans with tickets, offering special memberships to kids, along with special 7-game membership for adults. And with the A-League recording its biggest attendances to date, plus with the World Cup Qualification for the Socceroos, here's hoping more Reds will take their seats at Cooper Stadium this summer.

Some more good news as captain and goalkeeping star Eugene Galekovic has decided to stay put in Adelaide after reportedly been impressed with the new setup behind the scenes. Galekovic will have a big year ahead of him this term as he hopes to impress and

book himself a seat on the plane to Brazil next June.

The Reds have had a solid, unbeaten pre-season, brushing away their state counterparts, getting one up over Victory and holding minors Western Sydney to a draw. But it doesn't get any easier from here, with a tricky start in the domestic league beckoning. The Reds face Perth Glory this Sunday, followed by the small matter of the interstate derby with Victory then a tough trip to Gosford to face the champions. After that they travel to Western Sydney in an attempt to revenge the 6-1 horror show from last season. It's a tough start for Josep and the Red's, but it will be a stern test to see just how much the new man has imprinted on the team.

Predictions

Project Gambou will be a slow and painful process. His philosophy is a brand new model in this country and the league, and will take time to bed in to his players. It's an exciting time to be an Adelaide United fan, no question, and who knows, if Carrusca can maintain his form last season, Djite can find the goals again, and the new Spanish kids can make an immediate impact, then we could see a surprise finals push for the Reds. But I see this as a long term project with long term results.

4th place finish.

## The Squad

1 Michael Theo (Gk)
2 Matt Smith ©
3 Shane Stefanutto
5 Ivan Franjic
7 Besart Berisha
9 Kofi Danning
10 Henrique
11 Liam Miller
12 Julius Doe
13 Jade North
14 Diogo Ferreira
15 James Donachie
17 Matt McKay
18 Luke Brattan
19 Jack Hingert
20 Matt Acton (Gk)
22 Thomas Broich
23 Dimitri Petratos
25 George Lambadaridis
26 Corey Brown
29 Kwame Yeboah (Youth)
30 Ben Litfin (Youth)

**Ins:**  
Matt McKay (Changchun Yatai)  
Dimitri Petratos (Kelantan)  
Diogo Ferreira (Melbourne Victory)  
Liam Miller (Perth Glory)  
Corey Brown (promoted from NYL squad)  
George Lambadaridis (promoted from NYL squad)  
Kofi Danning (CS Vise)

**Outs:**  
Ben Halloran (Fortuna Dusseldorf, Germany), Steve Lustica (Adelaide United), Matthew Jurman (Sydney FC), Massimo Murdocca (Heart), Stefan Nijland.

# Roar seek return to days of old

## Brisbane Roar



By Jarrod Ellis

Bravado and impressive early results proved a false dawn in the post-Postecoglou era as Brisbane Roar's 2012-13 season turned out to be one of turmoil at the club. The once trusted Rado Vidosic was replaced mid-season by Mike Mulvey and a stuttering Roar side's title defence petered out at the semi-final stage.

For some clubs that would have made for a reasonable season, but it's an indicator of just how much the Roar progressed under Postecoglou that the club and its fans were left with a feeling of opportunity missed.

This time around Mulvey is set for his first full-season in charge and with the aid of an offseason and a retooling of the midfield, is hoping to restore Brisbane to its glory days of "Roarcelona" when the men in orange swept all before them.

At first glance Brisbane certainly have a squad capable of challenging for the title. With names like Theoklitos, Broich, Berisha, Smith, Franjic, Stefanutto in the squad it's clear that this is a team that knows success, knows what it takes to win in the A-League.

That experience is Brisbane's



Former skipper Matt McKay makes a welcome return to Suncorp.



Besart Berisha will once again lead the attack for the Queenslanders.



Dimitrios Petratos returns to the A-League after a stint in Malaysia.

great strength this season. Along with the star names of last season, Liam Miller and Matt McKay have been added to the mix giving the Roar arguably the strongest starting eleven in the league.

The arrival of Miller and the return of former Roar skipper McKay are the only major additions for Brisbane this season, effectively replacing the departed Mitch Nichols and Massimo Murdocca. The return of fan favourite McKay was greeted with universal approval and his energy and passing game should mesh seamlessly with his old teammates. Miller, even at 32, should provide an improvement on the erratic Nichols whilst also reducing the playmaking duties heaped on Thomas Broich.

Luke Brattan returns and having made the step-up to the first eleven last season is expected to play a

major role in midfield. The twenty-three year old's passing ability is already well recognised and should he continue to adapt to his role as midfield anchor then Brisbane will be truly formidable in the centre of the park.

New additions Dimitri Petratos and Diogo Ferreira will both be hoping they can make the same progress Brattan has. Neither player yet having delivered on the potential shown in their admittedly still young careers.

Both George Lambadaridis and Kofi Danning are also listed in the squad however neither is expected to feature this season as both recover from long-term knee injuries.

Serious injuries proved a hindrance to Brisbane last season as well with skipper Matt Smith missing the majority of the season

with a hip injury. This time around Smith is fit and ready to return to a defence that is largely unchanged from the side that won consecutive Championships.

Smith is set to form a central defensive partnership with January signing Jade North, a move that will enable Brisbane to field an entire back four with Socceroo experience.

Shane Stefanutto and Ivan Franjic remain first choice on either flank but the latter may see time further forward, Jack Hingert stepping in as a more than able replacement.

Brisbane's attack is where the one great weakness of their 2013-14 A-League campaign comes bursting to the fore, lack of depth. Despite being able to field a formidable first eleven Brisbane lack strength in depth, especially upfront.

Aside from Besart Berisha there

is not a single recognised striker in the squad. The fiery Albanian has led the line with aplomb for two seasons now and will need to do so once again if Brisbane is to consistently find the back of the net.

Henrique was absent for much of last season due to injury and if he can stay fit should provide some added sharpness in the final third, but by no stretch of the imagination is the diminutive Brazilian a central striker.

There has been talk of Kwame Yeboah filling the role as main backup to Berisha but despite an impressive preseason and stint in the NYL the 19 year old is unproven at A-League level.

Brisbane do have one remaining Visa spot and it's been suggested that Mulvey would like to fill it with English striker Antonio Murray, currently playing his trade with NPL Queensland outfit Brisbane City.

So far that hasn't eventuated and it may be the case that the final Visa spot is kept open for a January signing. Stef Nijland arrived on loan in the transfer window last season and it's not difficult to envisage a similar signing occurring this season.

In considering Brisbane's hopes this season it's impossible to look past the depth issue. Despite possessing an enviable collection of players, a couple of ill-timed knocks or a long-term injury to Berisha would likely leave the Roar's finals, let alone title, hopes in tatters.

## The Squad

1. Justin Pasfield	G
2. Daniel McBreen	F
3. Joshua Rose	D
4. Marcel Seip	D
5. Zachary Anderson	D
6. Brent Griffiths	D
7. John Hutchinson (C)	M
8. Nick Montgomery	M
9. Mitchell Duke	F
10. Marcos Flores	M
11. Nick Fitzgerald	M
12. Liam Reddy	G
13. Hayden Morton	D
14. Michael McGlinchey	M
15. Storm Roux	D
16. Trent Sainsbury	D
17. Anthony Caceres	M
18. Michael Neill	D
19. Matt Simon	F
21. Mile Sterjovski	F
22. Tom Slater	M
23. Adam Kwasnik	F

Ins:  
Marcel Seip (VVV Vento, Holland), Matt Simon (Chunnam, Korea), Marcos Flores (Victory), Storm Roux (Glory), Tom Slater (Sydney), Michael Neil, Hayden Morton (NYL).

Outs: Pedj Bojic (Sydney FC), Patrick Zwaanswijk (retired), Oliver Bozanic (Luzern, Switzerland), Mat Ryan (Club Brugge, Belgium), Bernie Ibini (Shanghai Dongya, China).

## Central Coast



By Adrian Deans

For the fourth year of the Arnold era, the Mariners commence the new season completely changed. The side that lifted the Champions Trophy in April has been ripped apart as, once again, higher profile or cashed up leagues plunder the cream of the Mariners' crop.

Patrick Zwaanswijk has retired. Rogic, Ryan, Ibini, Bozanic have all gone overseas while Pedj Bojic has moved closer to home. Also, the fans will be awaiting nervously the return from loan of Danny McBreen, whose performances in the Chinese Super League may well result in an offer to stay.

These players aren't easy to replace, and they may not be the end of it. Trent Sainsbury was seriously courted by English and Swiss clubs in the off-season and the fact he hasn't yet gone is staggering. For me he was the Mariners' best player last campaign and (with Nikolai Topor-Stanley) one of the two best central defenders in the league. His continuing presence at Gosford is almost as astonishing as his ongoing absence from the Socceroos.

So, at first glance it looks a hard ask for the Mariners to repeat last year's success, but they do have



Graham Arnold has worked wonders with a limited budget.

two factors in their favour. The first is Graham Arnold who has shown that he is capable of setting up a side and system to suit the players he has available. I was worried last year when John Hutchinson was named captain because I thought he had performed poorly the year before as Mustafa Amini's or Roslyn Griffith's understudy in a narrow diamond system. But Arnie changed the system for last year – the Mariners mostly played with a screening pair in front of the back four and Hutchinson, with Nick Montgomery alongside, was immense – one of the most effective players in the league.

The other factor to give Mariners fans confidence is the Youth team. They have won (or been runner up) every year for the last four, which is indicative of the excellent coaching resources throughout the club,



The Mariners take to the field before last season's Grand Final and hold hopes of successfully defending their title.



Matt Simon returns to the Coast after a stint in Korea.

with Liam Reddy hoping to put his Sydney FC nightmare behind him and apply enough pressure to keep Pasfield on his toes. Pasfield had a number of excellent games when Ryan was unavailable and I would not be surprised to see him emerge this year as a quality A-League keeper.

All in all, despite the many departures, Mariners fans can look forward to the new season with confidence that Arnie's system remains rock solid and that the new players will fit well enough to keep the Mariners punching above their weight for at least another year.

Adrian Deans is the author of *Mr Cleansheets and more recently Straight Jacket – published by High Horse Books and available in all good book stores. www.adrian-deans.com*

## The Squad

1 Andrew Redmayne	G
2 Jeremy Walker	D
3 Robbie Wielert	D
4 Orlando Engelaar	M
5 Sam Mitchell	M
6 Patrick Gerhardt	M
7 Iain Ramsay	F
8 Massimo Murdocca	M
9 Dylan Macallister	F
10 Harry Kewell	F
11 Michael Mifsud	F
13 Jonatan Germano	M
14 Golgot Mebrahtu	F
15 David Williams	F
16 Aziz Behich	D
17 Jason Hoffman	D
18 David Vrankovic	D
19 Benjamin Garuccio	F
20 Tando Velaphi	GK
21 Stefan Mauk	M
22 Nick Kalmar	M
23 Mate Dugandzic	F
24 Patrick Kisnorbo	D
25 Andrea Migliorini	M

Ins: Orlando Engelaar (PSV, NETH)  
Rob Wielert (Roda JC, NETH)

Harry Kewell (free)  
Massimo Murdocca (Brisbane Roar)

Tando Velaphi (Melbourne Victory)  
Iain Ramsay (Adelaide United)

Aziz Behich (Bursaspor, LOAN)  
Stefan Mauk (promoted from youth team)

Patrick Kisnorbo (Leeds United)

Michael Mifsud (Valletta)

Andrea Migliorini (FC Koper)

Outs: Clint Bolton (retired), Josip Tadic (Rijeka, Croatia), Eli Babalj (AZ Alkmaar, Holland), Simon Colosimo (India), Matt Thompson, Fred, Marcel Meeuwis, Jamie Coyne.

Competition for places at the back

## Heart ready for massive attack

## Melbourne Heart



By Adrian Houghtan

Without a pre-season win against A-League opposition over the break, one could be forgiven for believing that the Heart face a torrid year ahead.

However, they do possess a squad that has been injected by quality in the off-season, and gaining good results early in the campaign will be imperative to breed confidence.

The signature of Harry Kewell is undoubtedly a lucrative marketing coup for the modest identity of the club.

However, does the former Leeds United and Liverpool star still have that natural ability to make a significant impact on the pitch?

Marquee man Orlando Engelaar's broken leg, which will force him out until at least the New Year could be lessened by the capture of Michael Mifsud.

The diminutive forward, just 165cm tall, is the captain of Malta and has scored a 37 goals in 99 appearances for his country.

He's an exciting playmaker and deadly finisher, with the 32-year-old famously known for his brace for Coventry City that knocked English giants Manchester United out of the 2007 League Cup



Harry Kewell returns to Melbourne and switches from the blue corner to the red corner. Photo: ZEE KO



Striker Michael Mifsud will spearhead the Heart attack Photo: ZEE KO

is at a premium with the signings of ex-Socceroo Patrick Kisnorbo and experienced Dutch centre-back Rob Wielert

After spending a decade of his career in the UK, namely for Leicester City and Leeds United, Kisnorbo makes a welcome return home to the A-League.

The ex-South Melbourne junior, 32, has declared that he's desperate to find his best form for the Red and White.

On the other hand, 34-year-old Wielert is another player who has a wealth of experience in the Eredivisie, playing for the likes of PSV and Ajax.

The arrival of the high-profile players is overshadowing the introduction of two experienced A-League players in Massimo Murdocca and Iain Ramsay from Brisbane and Iain Ramsay from the back

They could be the finest additions

to the team.

Murdocca has over 160 games of experience in the competition and the extremely consistent 29-year-old is a welcome acquisition.

As for Ramsay, he comes with maturity beyond his years and is capable of creating loads of chances. Aziz Behich returns to the club on a season-long loan from Turkish outfit Bursaspor, and will provide some much needed defensive steel and width in the left-back post.

As for the departures, playmaker Fred left the club after a two-year stint, goalkeeper Clint Bolton retired after an impressive career, whereas the likes of Josip Tadic and Eli Babalj have moved to European clubs Rijeka and AZ Alkmaar.

Simon Colosimo, Matt Thompson, Marce Meeuwis and Jamie Coyne were all released by the club at the conclusion of the 2012-13 season. The Heart were nothing but atrocious on the road last season, claiming just a solitary point from a possible 36 – excluding the Melbourne derbies.

A team thin on quality eventually wilted, as the season entered its final months, finishing in lowly ninth place.

Last term the side's leaky defence conceded 40 goals and a tame attack scored only 31 times, only two shy of Perth Glory who had the division's lowest tally.

What was most alarming was the team's inability to pick up points or engineer a result in losing situations, which is evident by their 16 losses from a possible 27 matches – the most in the division.

People will believe that if Kewell can produce close to his best possible form in his waning career, then perhaps a finals appearance is well within the club's grasp.

With a World Cup on the horizon, and a determined Kewell indicating his desire to be part of an unprecedented third consecutive World Cup appearance, the motivation appears to be genuine.

This can only bode well for the Red and White.

Mate Dugandzic is virtually like a new signing as the 23-year-old returns from a year off with a severe foot injury.

He was a star performer in the 2011-12 campaign, scoring seven goals and providing seven assists in 21 appearances.

If the highly-rated attacking midfielder can replicate his best form, it will go a long way to yielding a healthy term.

It's been a pre-season of optimism for the Melbourne Heart after the extremely disappointing campaign they endured in 2012-13.

An abysmal away record was a major factor behind their capitulation, with the club failing to assert themselves in their third-year of existence.

Whether they have learned some valuable lessons under the stewardship of coach John Aloisi remains to be seen.

If the ninth placed finish represented a transitional phase for the club, then this upcoming term must be one of consolidation, and redemption.

Strong home form is always crucial, but away from home they will be reliant on the experienced players to lead by example and help pick up valuable results.

Kewell is one of those, and the football community will be waiting to assert judgment about that man and team he now represents.

## The Squad

1	Nathan Coe (Gk)
2	Pablo Contreras
3	Adama Traore
4	Nick Ansell
5	Mark Milligan
6	Leigh Broxham
7	Guilherme Finkler
8	Jonathan Bru
9	Kosta Barbarouses
10	Archie Thompson
11	Connor Pain
13	Andrew Naboult
14	James Troisi
15	Mitch Nichols
16	Rashid Mahazi
17	James Jeggo
18	Francesco Stella
20	Lawrence Thomas (Gk)
22	Jesse Makarounas
23	Adrian Leijer
24	Scott Galloway
25	Jason Geria
26	Jordan Brown
27	Christopher Cristaldo NYL
28	John Buceto NYL
29	Luc Jeggo NYL
30	Dylan Murnane NYL
31	Luke Radonich NYL

Ins:  
 Pablo Contreras  
 Kosta Barbarouses  
 James Troisi  
 Mitch Nichols  
 Rashid Mahazi

Outs: Marco Rojas (Stuttgart, Germany), Marcos Flores (Marians), Billy Celeski (Al Shaab, UAE), Diogo Ferreira (Roar), Tando Velaphi (heart), Daniel Mullen (Dalian Aerbin, China), Spase Dilevski, Theo Markelis, Matt Foschini.

## Melbourne Victory



By Andrew Bishara

After finishing third last year, much will be expected from Ange Postecoglou's second season at the Melbourne Victory.

This is year two of the Postecoglou era. Year one was all about transition and adaptation. Year Two is about taking that next step.

When the biggest club in Australia brought over one of the A-League's most successful coaches, it speaks volumes about what it wants to achieve. Fans didn't expect success from kick-off, but they wanted improvement.

Postecoglou and his men did that: third place and tough 1-0 semi-final loss to eventual champions Central Coast can be seen as progress, considering Postecoglou was implementing his brand of possession football.

Throughout the season, Postecoglou chopped and changed a team littered with veterans, bringing in younger players, dealing with a parade of injuries and low pool of depth.

But now with a year under his belt, the expectations are higher. He understood that Victory lacked strong depth when key players went missing and mentality at times, they



Socceroo Mark Milligan will wear the captain's armband this year.

struggled under pressure. So pre-season was all about fine adjustments and being prepared for the long season ahead.

Firstly the necessary cull: Tando Velaphi, Diogo Ferreira, Sam Gallagher, Spase Dilevski, Petar Francic, Isaka Cernak and Marco Flores were all dumped.

The Argentine didn't have the best season, playing in flashes, but his transfer was understandable. With Gui Finkler back in the fold, the two play a similar role, and when they played together often clashed on the field, meaning one had to go. It was also an opportunity to bring in a player to fix last season's gripe: the poor defence.

Conceding 45 goals, showed that Victory needed a stronger structure from top to bottom and an experienced Kevin Muscat figure to lead it. The latter was addressed with



Chilean international Pablo Contreras arrives at Victory with a high quality reputation having played in UEFA Champions League and the 2010 World Cup.

the arrival of Chilean Pablo Contreras.

The 35-year-old central defender is exactly what the Victory need. Having played for Chile 66 times, as well as across a host of European clubs, the tough South American will bring that grit, experience and leadership that the Victory missed last season.

The Chilean will no doubt help Adrian Leijer and Nick Ansell, but it remains to be seen which one of the duo will be played next to Contreras.

The full backs positions are assured with Adama Traore, Jason Geria and Scott Galloway battling it out; while Nathan Coe's position in 'keeper is a lock in.

Postecoglou also had to the deal with other departures, but none by his own accord. Last season's Johnny Warren Medal winner

Marco Rojas left for the Bundesliga, while Billy Celeski joined up with Al Shaab in the UAE. Both are huge losses for the Victory, but their replacements have been effectively matched with Postecoglou going back to his former club, the Brisbane Roar.

Signing Mitch Nichols and former Roar winger, Kosta Barbarouses means the Victory are getting young premiership winning players, who already know what it takes to go all the way.

Nichols is a transfer coup. He brings a killer pass to the team, hard work and an eye for goal, but more significantly, adds depth to a thinly stretched midfield.

With new captain Mark Milligan assured his position in deep midfield, the battle for the duo that will play alongside him is now tougher. Leigh Broxham, James Jeggo,

Jonathan Bru, Francesco Stella and Finkler will all provide competition, a good thing to keep everyone on their toes.

While Barbarouses will be expected to fill the shoes left by Rojas. The 23-year-old winger had a torrid goal-less drought overseas, but back in similar surroundings, could spark up the Victory attack.

Success though, might come from the quiet signing of James Troisi. The young Socceroo has returned to the A-League on loan from Atlanta and gives Postecoglou more options, being able to play on the wing and through the middle.

Their arrivals also release the pressure off Connor Pain and Andrew Naboult to focus on improving their own game, as well as the aging Archie Thompson. Just like last season, the goal-scoring burden will be put on the wingers, but Postecoglou will hope that it is more spread than the Rojas-led goals of last year.

On paper, the Victory has strengthened: adding quality depth to the team. But there are plenty of issues that remain. How the new players settle in with each other and adapt to Postecoglou's methods will affect their fluency at the start of the season. So too, their lack of fire-power upfront: for all their fine additions, a striker in the Besart Berisha mould would have been very welcomed.

Those are solvable issues though; a spread of goals, and a tighter defence might lead Victory one step further this year. A finals place should be a lock in, but if things fall into place, a title isn't off the cards.

## The Squad

1	Mark Birighitti	GK
2	Scott Neville	D
3	Taylor Regan	D
4	Kew Jaliens	D
5	Ben Kantarowski	M
6	Zenon Caravella	M
7	Andrew Hoole	D
8	Ruden Zadkovich	M
9	Emile Heskey	F
10	Nathan Burns	F
11	Craig Goodwin	F
12	Connor Chapman	D
13	Joey Gibbs	F
14	Josh Mitchell	D
15	Joshua Brillante	M
16	Jacob Pepper	M
17	James Virgili	F
18	James Brown	M
19	Michael Bridges	F
20	Ben Kennedy	GK
21	Sam Gallaway	D
22	Adam Taggart	F
24	Mitchell Oxborrow	M
25	Mitch Cooper	M
30	John Solari	GK

Ins:  
 Kew Jaliens - Wisla Krakow  
 Nathan Burns - Incheon United (on loan)  
 Joey Gibbs - Western Sydney Wanderers

John Solari - White City (South Australian Premier League)

Outs: Jack Duncan (Perth), Bernardo Ribeiro, Dominik Ritter, Marko Jesic.

## Sky's the limit for new-look Jets

## Newcastle Jets



By Shaun Dyas

The Newcastle Jets head into the new A-League season accompanied by something they have not had to deal with the last couple of seasons, expectation.

In the last few editions of the A-League, fans were hopeful rather than expectant as new faces seemed to come in and out of the Jets squad, in what looked like some form of a revolving door recruitment policy. Things are completely different this year with only three new faces in the squad, in the form of Dutch defender Kew Jaliens, former Adelaide United prodigy Nathan Burns and goal keeper John Solari.

Jaliens is a former Dutch international with experience playing in the 2006 world cup and has come to fix the main problem area for the Jets that dates back to the last time they won the championship, defence.

Last season the Jets shipped a massive 45 goals on their way to an 8th placed finish and an early finish to their season.

Jaliens has been brought in to help shore up this defence and provide the side with a base in which they can mount a sustained and serious top 4 assault.

The signing of Burns is an inter-



Nathan Burns arrives on loan until January 2014

esting one. While the forward's quality and ability cannot be questioned, at this stage he is only on loan at the club until early January, meaning as things currently stand he will be ending his loan spell and returning to Korea's Incheon United at the business end of the A-League season.

These new faces will be blended with a squad that, while youthful in age, is not short on footballing experience.

Several of the younger members of this squad, the likes of Craig Goodwin, James Virgili and Samuel Gallaway now have a year of A-League experience in their kitbag and will be expected to push on heavily this season.

This coupled with players like Connor Chapman, Adam Taggart, Andrew Hoole and Josh Brillante all having gone to Turkey and rep-



A pre-season injury means Emile Heskey will miss the start of the season, but no doubt the former England striker will be big threat once fit. Photo: ZEE KO

resenting Australia at the Under 20 world cup.

When you add this youthful mix with veterans like towering Englishman Emile Heskey, compatriot Michael Bridges and Jaliens, then the Novocastrian faithful have every right to expect a play-off appearance.

The Jets will have to fix two major areas in order for this to occur, their set piece defending and their ability to play the ball out from the back into midfield.

Too often last season the Jets were simply poor in dealing with deliveries from set piece situations, leading to simple goals from their opponents.

Conversely, the Jets defence was just as bad when it came to playing their way out from the back. Opposition teams would let the centre backs of the Jets have the ball

and would press the moment they looked to play into midfield and more often than not they would win back possession of the ball. If the Jets can rectify this then they will be able to unleash one of their more dangerous weapons, the speed they have across the ground. Newcastle with players like Virgili, Goodwin, Taggart and company possess enough speed to seriously threaten sides in behind and on the counter attack.

If they can ally this with the power of Heskey and the guile of Bridges and Burns in the front third, then they should score more than enough goals to propel themselves into the upper echelon of the league.

Newcastle will also go into this season with a massive amount of depth in the central midfield area. Captain Ruben Zadkovich, Zenon Caravella, Brillante and the



Former Dutch international Kew Jaliens

returning Ben Kantarowski are all aspiring to make the two holding positions in Van Egmond's 4-2-3-1 their own. The man to really keep an eye on this season will be midfielder James Brown. He arrived under immense pressure to perform last season and eventually returned from injury prematurely and did not really get to show the Newcastle fans what he was about.

With a more settled pre-season now under his belt, look for him to add some creativity and spark that the Jets so often lacked last season.

James Virgili will also be one to watch this season.

He has been scoring goals for fun in pre-season and if he can continue this when the real stuff starts then he may well become a new favourite at Hunter Stadium. Just how this squad will go is anyone's guess.

The feeling is that the bare minimum for this squad is a top 6 position, but there is no reason why they should not aim higher. Newcastle has to make the top 4 in my opinion and if they do so, it is highly likely that the under pressure Van Egmond will be rewarded with a new contract.

## The Squad

Jacob BURNS	M
Isaka CERNAK	M
Jack CLISBY	D
Matthew DAVIES	M
Daniel DE SILVA	M
Travis DODD	F
Jack DUNCAN	GK
Cameron EDWARDS	M
Ryan EDWARDS	M
Dean EVANS	M
Chris HAROLD	F
Scott JAMIESON	D
Jamie MACLAREN	F
Ndumba MAKECHE	F
Steven McGARRY	M
Ryo NAGAI	M
Harry O'BRIEN	M
Brandon O'NEILL	M
Steven PANTELIDIS	D
Josh RISDON	D
Sidnei SCIOLA MORAES	M
Shane SMELTZ	F
Michael THWAITE	D
Daniel VUKOVIC	G
Riley WOODCOCK	D
Adrian ZAHRA	F

**Ins:** Isaka CERNAK (Phoenix), Jack CLISBY (NYL), Matthew DAVIES (NYL Contracted Player), Jack DUNCAN (Jets), Cameron EDWARDS (Melbourne Heart), Ryan EDWARDS (Reading - loan), Dean EVANS (Injury Replacement Stirling Lions), Jamie MACLAREN (Blackburn Rovers, UK), Harry O'BRIEN (NYL), Sidnei SCIOLA MORAES (Aiki, Cyprus), Riley WOODCOCK (NYL)

**Outs:** Storm ROUX (Central Coast), Matias CORDOBA (Petrolero, Bolivia), Kearyn BACCUS (Blacktown City Demons, NSWPL), Evan BERGER (Marconi Stallions, NSWPL), Dean HEFFERNAN (Wanderers), Lewis ITALIANO (Phoenix), Jesse MAKAROUNAS (Victory), Billy MEHMET (Dempo SC, IPL), Liam MILLER (Roar), Nicholas WARD (released), Neil YOUNG (retired)

# Young-guns to fire Glory

## Perth Glory



By Adrian Houghton

A team that seems to be flying under the radar is the Perth Glory, and they could surprise with their blend of youth and experience.

Glory secured a finals berth in the final match of last season, after a draw against Adelaide United was enough to see them finish sixth.

A dramatic elimination finals loss to Melbourne Victory ended an inconsistent campaign for the West Australian outfit.

Alastair Edwards replaced Ian Ferguson in early February and did a credible job that saw him rewarded with a permanent deal with the club.

The Glory lacked firepower last season, scoring the lowest amount of goals in the competition (29), but did boast a relatively solid defence.

Looking ahead to the upcoming campaign and there's been a lot to like about Glory's youthful squad.

Young Socceroos star Daniel De Silva has courted much media focus for his exploits at the U/20 World Cup in the off-season.

The 16-year-old is a hugely promising talent and must be nurtured properly by the Perth coaching



Jamie McLaren joins Glory from Blackburn Rovers



Travis Dodd.  
Photo: ADAM BUTLER



Sharp-shooter Shane Smeltz

staff, but it's hard not to be excited by the young starlet's capabilities, especially when the likes of England heavyweights Manchester United reportedly are monitoring his services.

Another youngster who's caught people's attention during the pre-season is striker Jamie McLaren, who returns after a spell with Blackburn Rovers.

He will be asked to take the burden off the likes of Smeltz and Travis Dodd, and with a deadly eye for goal, expect the 19-year-old to make his mark.

Agonisingly, former Socceroos defender Ljubo Milicevic decided to part company with the club just a week before the beginning of the season.

By all reports the 32-year-old was forming a strong partnership with fellow centre-back Michael

Thwaite, which now poses unwanted structural issues for the coaching staff.

Aside from those dramas, there will be significant interest surrounding Edwards' decision to draft in sons Ryan on loan from Reading and Cameron from the Melbourne Heart.

In the Glory's final pre-season outing they registered an emphatic 3-0 result against Sydney FC, with Brazilian recruit Sidnei Scioila adding the third goal of the match.

Amazingly, he paid for his own trip to Perth for a trial and earned a contract for his efforts, it's determination like this that looks set to turn a few heads this upcoming campaign.

The departures of influential midfielder Liam Miller and defender Dean Heffernan will hurt the club in terms of maturity and leader-

ship.

Miller in particular will be big loss, but it's not out of the question to see an exuberant De Silva stepping into his role and performing a creative midfield role with aplomb.

Edwards has spoken about his desire to play a possession-based style of football and has continued to evolve with the 4-3-3 formation, which should endear itself to the fan base.

There will a strong emphasis on an attacking impetus from the Glory in the wide areas, especially with ex-Melbourne Heart wide man Adrian Zahra rediscovering his fine form of a couple of seasons ago.

From the defence right through to the forwards there's a host of talented players, and if the team quickly adapt to Edwards' vision then there's no reason to suggest why they can't be a team that com-

## SFC to turn on the bling

### Sydney FC



By Bryson Ferreira

The Sky Blues will be looking to put a rollercoaster 2012-13 behind them when they take on the Newcastle Jets in round one of the new A-League season.

The blue half of Sydney will be looking for nothing less than finals after being outshone by their Western neighbours in their inaugural season.

There's a host of talented new faces at Moore Park who are looking to impress Frank Farina.

The Sky Blues coach will expect considerable improvement after a forgetful campaign last year.

2012-13 can only be described as inconsistent for Sydney FC, both on and off the pitch.

In fact, inconsistent is probably an understatement.

There were certainly plenty of highs; signing the one and only Alessandro Del Piero, a 35,000 strong crowd at the season opener, a run of 5 consecutive home wins, and the signings of Socceroo's Joel Griffiths and Lucas Neil.

Unfortunately, the lows outweighed the highs.

Ian Crook resigned after just 6 matches, which included an embarrassing 7-2 loss to eventual champions Central Coast.



Richard Garcia will add stability to the SFC line-up.



Can Alessandro Del Piero deliver finals football this year?  
Photo: GREG SEATON

Awful defending was at the forefront of Sydney FC's problems for the remainder of the season, conceding a whopping 51 goals, the worst defence in the league.

Poor away form and an overall lack of consistency and quality was accentuated by a horrible run of injuries, which saw utility player and work-horse Rhyan Grant cover almost every position on the pitch.

Thankfully there was one shining light, and if last year was anything to go by, Sydney FC fans will be hoping Alessandro Del Piero will be shining throughout 2013-14 as well.

The biggest name to ever grace our footballing shores lived up to all expectations, even if his team-carrying performances didn't lead to any silverware.

Already a club legend, ADP has been announced captain in one of the most important seasons for

Sydney FC in some time.

So far, the Sky Blues pre-season has been anything but consistent, but coach Frank Farina still described their trip to Italy as an 'astounding success'.

The team were put through a vigorous and intense training camp that included six games in three weeks.

An unprecedented amount of support thanks to Del Piero saw over 30,000 Italian fans watch the six friendly matches, something that surely added to an already tremendous experience for the whole squad.

Pre-season results in Australia have not been great however, with five losses in a row, including a 1-0 defeat to the Newcastle Jets, who they play in Friday nights season opener.

As much as Sydney FC would have gained confidence out of one

or two more pre-season wins, it's safe to say they will be quietly confident given their recruitment in the off-season.

Last years players, as well as the new recruits will be looking to play a possession based, pressing style implemented by Frank Farina's new number two and former Brisbane Roar coach, Rado Vidic.

The players who have been brought in, as well as those who remain from last year, should be more than capable of taking to this new style that should hopefully gain admirers around the league and impress supporters in the Cove.

In a season where the only direction expected is forward, the Sky Blues have made some excellent signings.

The worst defence in the league last year will have four new faces at the back, after recruiting Nicola Petkovic, Matt Jurman, Marc War-

petes with the competition's highly fancied sides.

The veterans can help lead the way to aid and rouse their young teammates for a competitive season ahead.

Success won't be instant, but the club is building a strong nucleus that can lead them towards a memorable season, and lay the foundations for potential title success in the future.

Prolific striker Shane Smeltz will again be pivotal to the club's fortunes this season.

The New Zealand international is rejuvenated after a distressing 2012-13 saw the leading forward diagnosed with Melanoma, and suffer from a series of injuries.

The A-League's record top-scorer still remains the most deadly striker in the division when in form.

With the injection of youth in the ranks, the 32-year-old will be buoyed by the new optimism that Edwards has brought to the club.

Hip surgery means that Smeltz will be sideline for the start of the campaign, but once he returns he'll be determined to dispel last season's heartache and help propel the Glory to a fruitful campaign.

While there is a host of young players in the squad, Edwards will be looking to captain Jacob Burns to help galvanise the squad and produce his typically high quality football, as well as 32-year-old Steven McGarry.

The pair along with Thwaite will be vital to ensuring that the team are focused and prepared for the rigours of a full A-League season. If the kids can hit their straps early and Smeltz replicates his best form, then the Glory can look towards the immediate future with genuine promise.

ren and Pedj Bojic.

These new faces, along with names such as Pascal Bosschaart, Seb Ryall and Tiago, should add quality and depth along the backline.

There is also added class in midfield, with Nicky Carle returning from a season long loan in the UAE, and Richard Garcia signing from Melbourne Heart.

Garcia was arguably the best player at the Heart last year and will fit nicely into Farina's possession based, passing style.

He will also add the extra creativity needed to create chances for those venturing forward.

Garcia and Carle can also chip in with goals at times, which might take some pressure off Del Piero up front.

Promising youngster Corey Gameiro also signs for the Blues from Fulham, and will add further depth to the forward line.

Young players like Blake Powell, Mitch Mallia, Joel Chianese, Terry Antonis, Peter Triantis and Rhyan Grant will also be looking to improve after all showing glimpses of what they are capable of in 2012-13.

The biggest test for Sydney FC this season will be the implementation of their new possession based style, and will certainly be a weakness for them in the first few rounds.

This was clear last year when Ange Postecoglou took over Melbourne Victory.

The Victory started off shaky, particularly in defence, but eventually finished third.

There is no doubt the Sky Blues have enough quality on paper, but after some disappointing results during pre-season, it remains to be seen whether Frank Farina and Rado Vidic can get their quality players to gel and get Sydney FC back to where they should be, at the top.

## The Squad

1	Glen Moss	GK
2	Manny Muscat	
3	Reece Caira	
4	Luke Adams	
5	Michael Boxall	
6	Josh Brindell-South	
7	Leo Bertos	
8	Paul Ifill	
9	Kenny Cunningham	
10	Stein Huysegems	
11	Jeremy Brockie	
12	Tyler Boyd	
14	Alex Rufer	
16	Louis Fenton	
17	Vince Lia	
18	Ben Sigmund	
20	Lewis Italiano	
21	Carlos Hernandez	
22	Andrew Durante	

Outs: Isaka Cernak (Perth), Mark Paston (retired), Tony Lochhead, Alex Smith, Dani Sanchez, Jimmy Downey, Lucas Pantelis.



Alex Rufer hopes to follow in his father Wynton's footsteps.

## Wellington Phoenix



By Joe Gallagher in NZ

Twelve months ago the A-League season was greeted by roar of anticipation on this side of the Tasman. As far as Kiwi pundits were concerned, it was going to be a Phoenix season to remember.

And while many involved with the club will find it difficult to forget the 2012/13 and its unenviable prize – a wooden spoon – they will be desperate to do so.

No surprise then that Wellington supporters have been a touch more subdued this winter. On paper the squad has scarcely improved. Then again, last season's squad was supposed to be of championship pedigree.

But there will be one distinct difference between this year's Phoenix and the Phoenix of the past. For the first time Wellington enters a season without Ricki Herbert at the helm. Herbert, a magnet for criticism, has undoubtedly left a lasting legacy on the club.

The search for his replacement had begun before even the final whistle blew on last season. The new coach was the owners' first point of business. A fresh way of thinking. Few were under any illusions that this wouldn't be the club's most important signing of the winter.



Two-time championship winning coach Ernie Merrick.

In May it was announced that the Scotsman, Ernie Merrick, would be the man to take over from Herbert. The former A-League winner, emerging from a shortlist that at times swung between absurd and ambitious, was immediately well received by the fans.

Merrick is capable, confident, pragmatic and – perhaps most importantly – proven at this level.

Merrick took the job with the knowledge that he would link up with one of his former charges in the Costa Rican Carlos Hernandez. Like his manager, the once Johnny Warren Medal winner has proven pedigree in the A-League and – if he can stay fit – there is more than enough evidence to suggest that the Wellingtonians might finally have recruited the creative midfielder they have craved, almost since their inception in 2007.

Hernandez was joined soon after



Carlos Hernandez returns to the A-League after a stint in India.

by compatriot Kenny Cunningham, a pacy winger, and Alex Rufer, a 17-year-old product of Wellington's apparent focus on youth and energy. The latter's surname alone is enough to excite fans on this side of the ditch.

Similarly when the signing of Spanish midfielder Albert Riera was announced earlier this week, a few had to double check that Riera hadn't attracted the services of the former Liverpool defender with whom he shares a name.

They might have hoped for the former Premier League pro. The midfield has long been one of the club's weaknesses; its defence is another. The Phoenix had the second-most porous backline last year (conceding 49 goals in 27 games), and kept only a handful of clean sheets. The return of Leo Bertos to midfield and the departure of foundation player Tony Lochhead in the



Costa Rican international Kenny Cunningham.

off-season meant that an already thin backline was set to be exposed even further.

The club added Reece Caira and Josh Brindell-South to play in the wing-back positions, and if Merrick's selections in pre-season are anything to go by, he's likely to give Michael Boxall more of a spell in the first eleven this term.

That is probably something that would be welcomed by fans. As much as they might hate to admit it, a lack of competition had bred an unhealthy culture of complacency amongst Wellington's back four.

But the flip side is that their backline is now lacking experience and could be exposed by the inevitable unavailability of key players.

That could end up a major concern this term. Beneath what appears to be a clear starting eleven the squad has a glaring shallowness to it. In

jury, suspension and international duty is a certainty to cripple the side at least once this season – Louis Fenton, Paul Ifill and Cunningham have already popped up with injuries and the club could lose over half a dozen first team regulars – including goalkeeper Glen Moss, captain Andrew Durante, two-time player of the year Ben Sigmund and last season's golden boot Jeremy Brockie – during international windows.

For that reason alone Wellington Phoenix might be forgiven a slow start to the league. Additionally, they will only play one game at their Westpac Stadium home in the opening eight weeks of the season.

If they are to stay in touch with the league throughout this period, Merrick simply must turn around the club's dire record in away fixtures that has seen them win just 16 in 79 games away from home in the league.

Like all of Wellington's past woes, it will be hoped that a change in mentality might do the trick. And to that point, what could be more invigorating than a new manager and a handful of fresh faces at training.

Phoenix fans have long become accustomed to the fact that their side's fortunes will likely depend on whether they can maintain consistency in their starting eleven and do the business away from home.

Will 2013/14 be any different?

City Lions with relative ease. In their Asia tour, they got first hand experience of what it will be like to compete in the ACL in 2014, playing against Shimizu S-Pulse, Guangzhou and Tokyo Verdy. Their first game was a 2-2 draw, in the second game they won with a huge margin of 5-0 and their last was a 2-1 loss, bringing their pre-season games a total of five wins, two draws and two losses out of nine games. Reflecting on the Asia tour Popovic commented "This was a very valuable trip both on and off the pitch. The new boys got to know everyone and we were able to test ourselves in some tough conditions in preparation for the Hyundai A-League and the AFC Champions League. We put ourselves through some tough travel, played in difficult conditions with high temperatures and strong opponents which will stand us in good stead for the season ahead."

So how will the FFA's newest addition do in the A-League and the AFC Champions League? Having won 12 of their 18 wins last season by a one goal margin (approximately 67%), 3 of them by two goals, one by 3 goals and one by 5, will the new season see them defend their title, given the changes the other 9 teams have made in the A-League? Will they be the third A-League team to pass the group stages of the AFC Champions League since joining in 2007? With new signings, an expected 20 million dollar upgrade which will see 4000 extra seats available at Parramatta stadium thanks to the Federal Government, sold out membership, which only means a louder Red and Black Block and stronger atmosphere, a coach having travelled abroad to gain insights and a strong pre season tour, how will the Wanderers go?

## Wanderers on the warpath

## Western Sydney



By Saman Ziae



Coach Tony Popovic exceeded all expectations last season and even won the Premiers Plate in fine style. More to come this season? Photo: ALI ERHAN

most obvious being Dino Kresinger and the shock, one who fans grew great admiration for, Western Sydney raised right back, Tarek Elrich. The Wanderers began their first season without scoring any goals and conceding two in their first three games, leaving many to question, where will they end up at the end of the season? Many fans were commenting on their lack of confidence in shooting, particularly when they had so many opportunities to do so in their first few games. I remember attending their first game with so much excitement, waiting to see how strong this new and long awaited team would be, only to leave thinking, why wouldn't anyone shoot confidently? Their defence was no doubt very strong, with a keeper like Ante Covic and defenders, Jerome Polenz, Shannon Cole, Adam

D'Apuzzo, Nikolai Topor-Stanley, Michael Beauchamp and La Rocca, and their possession in midfield was noticeable with the likes of Ono, Mooy and Hersi standing out, but something or a few things were missing upfront. Signs of improvement, however, were shown in week four away from home in their first win against Brisbane Roar and they eventually became the team with the most shots and least goals so the pendulum had definitely swung. Having the strongest defence in the 2012/13 A-League season, conceding the lowest on the table only 21 goals, who could be the necessary additions to the team?

Earlier in the year commenting on new strikers Popovic stated "You don't categorise this sort of player simply as a 'striker. It's got to be the right fit for the club. Is it a tall

Ins:  
Dean Heffernan (from Perth Glory)  
Tomi Juric (from Adelaide United)

Brendon Santalab (from Chongqing Lifan, China)

Josh Barresi (elevated from youth side)

Yianni Perkatis (elevated from youth side)

Matthew Spiranovic (Al Arabi, Qatar)

Outs:  
Tarek Elrich (to Adelaide United)

Joey Gibbs (to Newcastle Jets)

Reece Caira (to Wellington Phoenix)

Rocky Visconte (to Suphanburi, Thailand)

Dino Kresinger (to Zavrc, Slovenia)

Others:  
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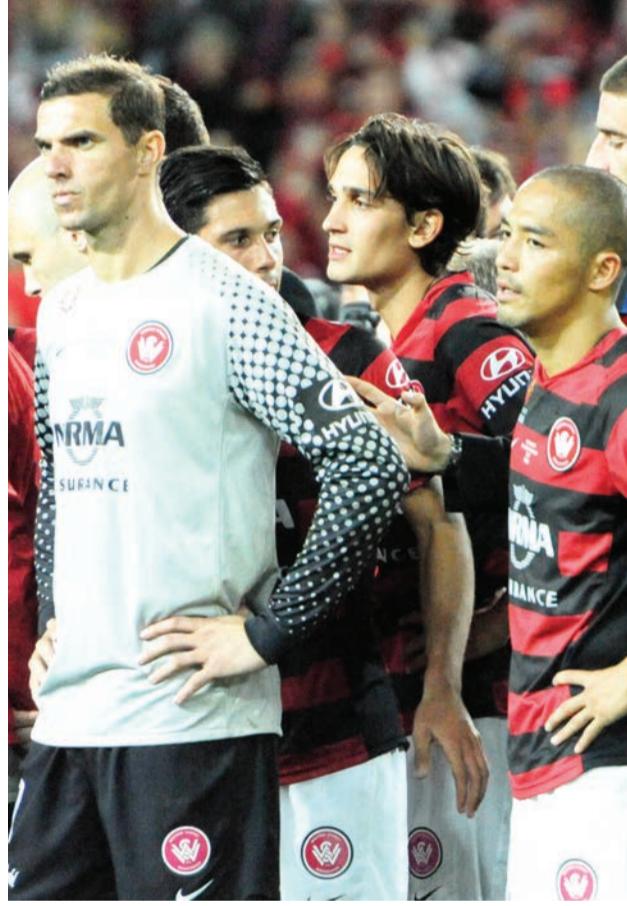
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Rocky Visconte (to Suphanburi, Thailand)

Dino Kresinger (to Zavrc, Slovenia)





## Sydney FC Line Up

1. Ivan NECEVSKI (GK)
2. Seb RYALL
3. Mark WARREN
5. Matt JURMAN
6. Nikola PETKOVIC
8. Predrag BOJIC
10. Alessandro DEL PIERO
11. Richard GARCIA
13. Tiago CALVANO
14. Mitchell MALLIA
16. Joel CHIANESE
19. Nicky CARLE
20. Vedran JANJETOVIC (GK)
22. Ali ABBAS
23. Rhyan GRANT
24. Hagi GLIGOR
27. Chris NAUMOFF.

\*one to be omitted

Unavailable: Brett EMERTON (back – 1 week), Terry MCFLYNN (Groin – 4 weeks), Peter TRIANTIS (groin – long term), Terry ANTONIS (thigh – long term), Pascal BOSSCHAART (ankle – long term), Corey GAMEIRO (knee – 4 weeks), Yairo YAU (international duty),

## Sydney FC v Newcastle Jets

Fri Oct 11 Allianz Stadium 7:30 PM

## A-League prepares for season opener

## Bryson Ferreira

Sydney FC takes on the Newcastle Jets on Friday night to kick off the most anticipated A-League season since its inception.

After the most successful A-League season in history, fans from around the league have been looking forward to Friday 11th October since the Mariners lifted the trophy back in April.

Despite the absence of Jets marquee man Emile Heskey, it's likely to be another bumper crowd that will no doubt create a caldron-like atmosphere inside Allianz Stadium.

Both teams will be looking to greatly improve after disappointing 2012-13 campaigns.

Last seasons 7th and 8th placed teams clash in a game that matches up one of last seasons worst defences [Sydney FC], with one of the leagues worst attacks [Newcastle Jets].

Both teams however, have made significant improvements to their squads after underachieving last



season.

The Jets welcome Nathan Burns on loan from Korea, who will have a point to prove after such a promising start to his career at Adelaide.

The 25 year old will be vital if the Jets are going to get off to a positive start, with Emile Heskey likely to miss the first three weeks of the campaign.

Newcastle has also recruited Kew Jaliens, who played for the Netherlands at the 2006 World Cup in Germany.

The experienced centre-half will be vital if the Jets are going to not only combat the likes of Del Piero on Friday night, but also re-organise a defense that leaked 35 goals last season.

The Jets will be looking to play a more expansive style this year in an attempt to give their talented strikers more opportunities.

The retention of youngsters Josh

Brillante and Craig Goodwin should go a long towards supplying scoring opportunities against Sydney FC on Friday night and throughout the season.

Gary Van Egmond and his Jets will be looking to expose the Sky Blues early, who have plenty of new faces across the backline that are adapting to a new style of play. Similarly, Frank Farina and his Sydney FC team will know how crucial it is to get off to a flying start early in the campaign, particularly at home in front of their home fans.

The corresponding fixture last year set the tone for a rollercoaster year for the Sky Blues, going down 2-3 in an entertaining, yet disappointing start to the season for the home fans.

Expect to see a lot more passing from Farina's men on Friday night, as they try to implement a

The Odds	Head-to-Head
\$1.91 Sydney FC	Played 26
\$3.50 Draw	SFC 13
\$3.75 Jets	Jets 6
	Drawn 7

Referee: Jarred Gillett

Radio Broadcast: 7.30pm (AEDT): Live coverage on 702 ABC Sydney and 1233 ABC Newcastle ABC Radio

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #SYDvNEW

Kiss of Death  
Sydney FC 1-1 Jets

possession based, pressing style of play.

They might not be at their fluent best in round one, but if the coaching staff at Sydney can implement this new style expect the likes of Carle, Emerton, Garcia and Del Piero to be playing some beautiful football in the coming months.

For this reason, the season opener might not live up to all of our expectations, as Sydney FC and the Newcastle Jets become accustomed to new styles and different approaches.

Expect nothing less than an electric atmosphere however, generated by the travelling Squadron and of course, the famous Cove.



## Jets Line Up

1. Mark BIRIGHITTI (GK)
2. Scott NEVILLE
4. Kew JALIENS
6. Zenon CARAVELLA
7. Andrew HOOLE
8. Ruben ZADKOVICH
10. Nathan BURNS
11. Craig GOODWIN
12. Connor CHAPMAN
15. Josh BRILLANTE
16. Jacob PEPPER
17. James VIRGILI
18. James BROWN
20. Ben KENNEDY (GK)
21. Sam GALLAWAY,
22. Adam TAGGART.

Unavailable: Emile HESKEY (knee – 3 to 4 weeks), Joey GIBBS (illness – 1 week), Michael BRIDGES (groin – 1 week), Mitch COOPER (knee – indefinite).



## Mariners Line Up

1. Justin PASFIELD (GK)
3. Joshua ROSE
4. Marcel SEIP
5. Zachary ANDERSON
6. Brent GRIFFITHS
7. John HUTCHINSON (C)
8. Nick MONTGOMERY
9. Mitchell DUKE
10. Marcos FLORES
11. Nick FITZGERALD
12. Liam REDDY (GK)
13. Hayden MORTON
15. Storm ROUX
16. Trent SAINSBURY
17. Anthony CACERES
19. Matt SIMON
21. Mile STERJOVSKI
22. Tom SLATER

\*two to be omitted\*

Unavailable: 2. Daniel MCBREEN (On loan at Shanghai SIPG until October 31), 14. Michael MCGLINCHY (International Duty, New Zealand All Whites), 18. Michael NEILL (Ankle – 1 week), 23. Adam KWASNIK (Groin – 1 week)

## CC Mariners v West Syd Wanderers

Sat Oct 12 Bluetongue Std 5:30 PM

## A Dish Best Served Cold...But For Whom?

## Adrian Deans

The two best teams of Season 8 are facing off in Round One, and both want revenge.

The Wanderers thirst for vengeance is fairly obvious – they lost the Grand Final and wish to set the record straight in the Mariners' back yard.

The Mariners' desire for retribution is less obvious, but just as earnestly felt. The last time the Wanderers (with the RBB in tow) came to Bluetongue, the Mariners played them off the park but succumbed to a sucker punch at the end of the game, giving the Wanderers and the raucous RBB undeserved gloating rights. It was a bad night for the Yellow Army and they would love nothing better than the chance to send the RBB pointless back to Parramatta.

Well, they'll do it tough. The Mariners are without Michael McGlinchey (last year's most creative player) and Daniel McBreen (last year's Golden Boot winner). They will be served up front by the



rampant Mitchell Duke – desperate to impress before next year's World Cup finals – and the returning local hero, Matt Simon. Some believe them too similar to play well together, but I believe Duke has grown beyond the rawness of youth and has become a subtler player with the vision to pick out the runs of team mates. He can play with anyone.

Trickier for the Mariners will be the replacement of McGlinchey, with Nick Fitzgerald being favourite, having impressed hugely in the pre-season. He is likely to start with Marcos Flores who will be desperate to restore his A-League reputation with a strong game in front of his new home crowd.

Twenty year old Kiwi, Storm Roux, should be a shoe-in at right

back (with Bojic having decamped to Sydney FC) but the central two will be Sainsbury plus either Zac Anderson or new old Dutchman, Marcel Seip. The keeper will be long-term understudy, Justin Pasfield, and of course, Hutchinson and Montgomery will reprise their screening roles which were so critical to the Mariners' success last season.

In contrast, the Wanderers have changed little.

They've added Tomi Juric and Matthew Spiranovic – both excellent players – to an already excellent squad. They had a strong pre-season tour of China and Japan, but looked ordinary in their trial against Melbourne Victory a couple of weeks ago.

The Wanderer's great strength is

The Odds	Head-to-Head
\$2.20 Mariners	Played 4
\$3.30 Draw	Mariners 2
\$3.10 Wanderers	Wanderers 1
	Drawn 1

Referee: Kris Griffiths-Jones

Radio Broadcast: 5.30pm (AEDT): Live coverage on ABC Central Coast 92.5, 702 ABC Sydney and Coast FM

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #CCMvWSW

Kiss of Death  
Mariners 1-2 Wanderers

their defence. Topor-Stanley and Beauchamp were outstanding in Season 8 and in the absence of McGlinchey and McBreen it's hard to see where the guile to get past them will come from. The Wanderers must go into this game as favourites, but you never write off Arnie and the Mariners.

It may well be the Yellow Army singing after 90 minutes on Saturday night.

*Adrian Deans is the author of Mr Cleansheets and more recently Straight Jacket – published by High Horse Books and available in all good book stores. www.adriandeans.com*



## Wanderers Line Up

1. Ante COVIC (GK)
2. Shannon COLE
3. Adam D'APUZZO
4. Nikolai TOPOR-STANLEY
5. Michael BEAUCHAMP
6. Jerome POLENZ
7. Labinot HALITI
8. Mateo POLJAK
9. Tomi JURIC
10. Aaron MOOY
11. Brendon SANTALAB
12. Tahj MINNECON
13. Matthew SPIRANOVIC
17. Youssouf HERSI
18. Iacopo LA ROCCA
19. Mark BRIDGE
20. Jerrad TYSON (GK)
21. Shinji ONO
22. Dean HEFFERNAN
23. Jason TRIFIRO

\*Four to be Omitted\*

Unavailable: 15. Yianni Perkatis (knee – 2 weeks), 16. Josh Barresi (leg – 2 weeks), 14. Kwabena Appiah (leg – 3 weeks)

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## Victory Line Up

1. Nathan COE (GK)
2. Pablo CONTRERAS
3. Adama TRAORE
4. Nick ANSELL
5. Leigh BROXHAM (c)
6. Gui FINKLER
7. Archie THOMPSON
8. Connor PAIN
9. Andrew NABBOUT
10. James TROISI
11. Mitch NICHOLS
12. Rashid MAHAZI
13. Jimmy JEGGO
14. Lawrence THOMAS
15. Jesse MAKAROUNAS
16. Adrian LEIJER
17. Scott GALLOWAY
18. Jason GERIA
- \*two to be omitted

Unavailable: 5. Mark MILLIGAN (international duty), 9. Kosta BAR-BAROUSES (international duty)



## Phoenix Line Up

1. Manny MUSCAT
2. Reece CAIRA
3. Luke ADAMS
4. Michael BOXALL
5. Josh BRINDELL-SOUTH
6. Paul IFILL
7. Kenny CUNNINGHAM
8. Stein HUYSEGEMS
9. Tyler BOYD
10. Albert RIERA
11. Vince LIA
12. Ben SIGMUND
13. Carlos HERNANDEZ
14. Hamish WATSON
15. Jason HICKS
16. Jacob SPOONLEY (GK)
17. James McPEAKE (GK)
- \*One to be omitted.

Unavailable: 1. Glen MOSS (international duty), 7. Leo BERTOS (international duty), 11 Jeremy BROCKIE (international duty), 14. Alex RUFER (under-17 international duty), 16. Louis FENTON (shoulder injury 3-5 weeks), 20. Lewis ITALIANO (GK, ankle injury 4-6 weeks), 22. Andrew DURANTE (international duty).

## Melbourne Victory v Melbourne Heart

Sat Oct 12 Etihad Stadium 7:30 PM

## Derby Day Fireworks in Melbourne

Andrew Bishara

It's become the traditional round one opener: the Melbourne Derby. Last year, the Heart took the points with a tight 2-1 win, but this is a new season, with new expectations and both teams will be looking to start their season with a win over their bitter rivals.

Based on pre-season, both sides have been irregular, displaying comprehensive victories over lowly state teams, but struggled against fellow A-League teams.

Nevertheless, the game will be fiery. The return of Harry Kewell to the fixture; this time for the Heart, will no doubt ruffle some feathers. Heart coach, John Aloisi has already confirmed that Kewell is a "certain starter" for the game.

But the best eleven for both sides probably won't be decided right till kick off; thanks to international fixtures and injury concerns, both sides will be missing players.

The Victory will be without captain and defensive anchor Mark Milligan, with coach Ange Postecoglou admitting he has yet to decide who will replace the key midfielder.

"It's not just about replacing Milligan in the middle of the park, but how we set up in the front half of



the pitch as a result," said Postecoglou at the start of the week.

"Broxy [Leigh Broxham] will be one of two in the centre. Jeggo is an option, but we could drop Mitch Nichols a bit deeper and get him to play there if we wanted. Maybe even Scott Galloway could be considered."

That "front half" will also be affected with new signing Kosta Barbarouses away with the New Zealand national team.

But the good news is that Archie Thompson, Adama Traore and Brazilian Gui Finkler are back, and pushing selection claims.

The Heart will be missing new striker Michael Mifsud, who has been called up for his 100th cap for Malta, but also Jonathan Germano

and Dylan Macallister; both who are injured.

Concerns though about experienced Dutch defender Rob Wielaert and midfielder Patrick Gerhardt are abated with both set to overcome their injury worries.

Heart new boys, Patrick Kisnorbo and Massimo Murdocca will make their starting debuts for the Heart. Kisnorbo will most likely play alongside Wielaert in a new look central defence, while Murdocca will play his usually midfield role. With both sides not at full strength, the game will be evenly matched. The battle, according to Heart's general manager, John Didulica will come down to who controls the midfield.

"The fundamental battle for the

The Odds	Head-to-Head
\$1.83 Victory	Played 9
\$3.40 Draw	Victory 3
\$4.00 Heart	Heart 3
	Drawn 3

Referee: Peter Green

Radio Broadcast: 7.45pm (AEDT) Live coverage on 774 ABC Melbourne and SEN Radio (Melbourne)

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #MelbDerby

**Kiss of Death**  
**Victory 1-1 Heart**



## Heart Line Up

1. Andrew REDMAYNE (GK)
2. Jeremy WALKER
3. Robbie WIELAERT
4. Sam MITCHINSON
5. Patrick GERHARDT
6. Ian RAMSAY
7. Massimo MURDOCCA
8. Harry KEWELL (Captain)
9. Golgo MEBRAHTU
10. David WILLIAMS
11. Aziz BEHICH
12. Jason HOFFMAN
13. David VRANKOVIC
14. Tando VELAPHI (GK)
15. Nick KALMAR
16. Mate DUGANDZIC
17. Andrea MIGLIORINI \*\*\*Two to be Omitted\*\*

Unavailable: 4. Orlando ENGE-LAAR (Fractured tibia – long-term), 9. Dylan MACALLISTER (Hamstring – 4-6 weeks), 11. Michael MIFSUD (International Duty), 13. Jonatan GERMANO (Hamstring – 3 weeks)

## Wellington Phoenix v Brisbane Roar

Sun Oct 13 Westpac Stadium 3:00 PM

## Depleted Phoenix mark Merricks return

Joe Gallagher

It's been a near-seven month hiatus but the A-League has finally returned. Wellington Phoenix will be one club with plenty to prove as they seek retribution for a disastrous 2012/13 which saw them collect the dreaded wooden spoon come season's end.

They might have asked for a more agreeable opponent on day one than Brisbane, however. The Queenslanders are have an edge over the hosts, who have beaten Mike Mulvey's club just twice in 18 attempts and have gone four games without victory against the Roar.

But if there's anything Wellington will welcome this year it's the concept of a fresh start. A new-look team with more than its fair share of youth, a new coach at the helm, and the possibility of six club debutantes on Sunday afternoon means that if one thing's for certain, history counts for little.

That's certainly the message that will be echoed by the club's most important off-season signing – though he won't even take to the pitch. Scotsman Ernie Merrick, the first appointed Phoenix coach since foundation manager Ricki Herbert in 2007, will be the man leading Wellington's bid for vengeance.

He will be keen to avoid looking too far ahead of his opening fixture, though that in itself is a daunting enough task.

Leading the line for Brisbane will be the prolific striker Besart Ber-



isha. With 14 goals to his name last season, he was the club's golden boot, and will more than likely be the club's main source of goals again this term. The frontman has scored five goals in his six matches against the Phoenix and will need to be very carefully kept in check by a Wellington backline already hampered by international duty and injury.

On that note, four key starters – Glen Moss, Andrew Durante, Leo Bertos and Jeremy Brockie – are away on All Whites duty this week, almost tearing the spine out of Merrick's first matchday team.

The depth of his squad will be tested right from the get-go, though he could scarcely claim to be unprepared.

Fringe players have been lining up for the Phoenix during a string of pre-season trials, the results of which could be considered little more than a 'mixed bag'.

Sunday's loss to a second-string side followed defeat at the hands of the amateur Auckland City and

an uninspiring draw with a national selection in Rotorua a fortnight ago.

Meanwhile, Brisbane were just one goal short of a full dozen in their latest kick-about.

Mind, the Roar will not necessarily be at full strength themselves. New signing Diogo Ferreira is in doubt due to injury, while returning talisman Matt McKay is also away on international duty with the Socceroos.

This and the departure of Mitch Nichols to Melbourne Victory in the off-season will mean that the Roar's creative department will be spearheaded by playmaker Thomas Broich on Sunday. The German will be joined by Liam Miller, who many tip to flourish at Brisbane.

But Wellington have made a key engine room signing of their own. The Yellow Fever's have been patiently awaiting the debut of 2010 Johnny Warren Medal winner Carlos Hernandez since his signing was announced by the club in February.

The Odds	Head-to-Head
\$2.90 Phoenix	Played 18
\$3.30 Draw	Phoenix 2
\$2.30 Roar	Roar 11
	Drawn 5

Referee: Tim McGilchrist

Radio Broadcast: 3.00pm (AEDT) Live coverage on 612 ABC Brisbane

Join the conversation on Twitter using the hash-tag #WELvBRI

**Kiss of Death**  
**Phoenix 1-1 Roar**



## Roar Line Up

1. Michael THEO (gk)
2. Matthew SMITH (c)
3. Shane STEFANUTTO
4. Ivan FRANJIC
5. Besart BERISHA
6. HENRIQUE
7. Liam MILLER
8. Jade NORTH
9. Diogo FERREIRA
10. James DONACHIE
11. Luke BRATTAN
12. Jack HINGERT
13. Matthew ACTON (gk)
14. Thomas BROICH
15. Dimitri PETRATOS
16. Corey BROWN
17. Brandon BORRELLO
18. Kwame YEBOAH
- \*two to be omitted\*

Unavailable: Matt MCKAY (International duty), George Lambadaridis (knee - season)



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# MELBOURNE VICTORY



## 2013/14 MELBOURNE VICTORY FOOTBALL CLUB

TOP ROW: 26 Jordan Brown, 8 Jonathan Bru, 4 Nick Ansell, 17 Jimmy Jeggo, 22 Jesse Makarounas, 13 Andrew Nabbout, 24 Sam Galloway,  
 MIDDLE ROW: 14 James Troisi, 25 Jason Geria, 7 Gui Finkler, 20 Lawrence Thomas, 1 Nathan Coe, 18 Francesco Stella, 16 Rashid Mahazi, 11 Connor Pain,  
 FRONT ROW: 3 Adama Traore, 23 Adrian Leijer, 2 Pablo Contreras, 5 Mark Milligan, Coach Ange Postecoglou, 10 Archie Thompson, 6 Leigh Broxham, 15 Mitch Nichols, 9 Kosta Barbarouses

Photo & Graphics: Anita Milas

**GOAL!**  
WEEKLY

# South To Play Northcote For Spot In VPL Grand Final

## Victorian Premier League

Brandon Galgano

The 2013 Victorian Premier League season really has had everything this year.

On the field we have seen a fantastic Northcote City side take out the minor premiership closely followed by a Bentleigh Greens outfit who saved their best for the finals series.

Whilst in the derby between South Melbourne and Melbourne Knights last weekend a crowd of 4750 saw Hellas advance into their first preliminary final since 2006. The Grand Final is now only two weeks away with Bentleigh already having booked their place in the decider and will now wait and watch as South Melbourne and Northcote City slug it out at JL Murphy Reserve at 3pm this Sunday afternoon in a bid to join them.

Despite all of the on-field success this season it is what has happened off the pitch which has seen the Victorian Premier League grab National and even International headlines for all the wrong reasons. First and foremost the ongoing saga relating to the FFV's new elite competition known as the NPL-V has been met by wide criticism from the clubs with over 60 of the State's most successful outfits including South Melbourne, Northcote City and Melbourne Knights not only boycotting the new league but have since taken the state's governing body to court seeking a federal injunction to halt these actions (which has since been approved as of Monday the 7th of October).

There is now every possibility that any plans to alter the current FFV system may be put off by another year meaning that the Victorian Premier League in its current state will continue as the top level of football in Victoria come 2014.

The most significant off field headline though came through what was described by many as the "largest match fixing scandal in Australian sporting history" as four players and the coach of the Southern Stars Football club were arrested by police for participating in a global match fixing ring which emanated from Europe and have subsequently been charged with "facilitating conduct that corrupts a betting outcome".

It still remains to be seen what the full punishment of these perpetrators will include with prison a very real possibility.

It is now time though to fully focus on the football and with just two matches left to play this season there are only three teams remaining in the hunt for silverware in 2013.

### Bentleigh Greens



Already qualified for GF  
Final Position (Regular Season):  
3rd 9W 9D 4L 34PTS

Last Match: 2-1 Win against  
Northcote in first Preliminary  
Final

Recent Form: WWDNPWW  
Coach: John Anastasiadis  
Star Man: Luke Sherbon

What a season it's been for Bentleigh. Not only have they qualified for their first ever Victorian Premier League grand final but they have done it in style with coach John Anastasiadis employing a quick possession based game which has gone from strength to strength as the year has gone on.

Having won all of their past four matches including sensational victories against Melbourne Knights away in the qualifying final and an extra time victory over Northcote City last weekend, you could be forgiven for thinking that this may



## FFV Preliminary Finals

### VPL

Northcote City v South Melbourne  
KO 3:00pm Sunday October 13  
JL Murphy Reserve - SS Anderson  
Reserve, Plummer St Port Melbourne

### WPL

Sandringham v Heidelberg United  
KO 12:00pm Sunday October 13  
JL Murphy Reserve - SS Anderson  
Reserve

South Melbourne celebrate  
after Tyson Holmes grabbed a  
stoppage-time winner in the  
1-0 win over old-time rivals  
Melbourne Knights last weekend.  
Photo: JIM WEBSTER

just be their year.

Star man Luke Sherbon has been at it again this campaign with a number of simply sensational performances having seen him come in a close second to Milos Lujic in the golden boot.

His hatrick hero performance against Knights two weeks ago only further enhanced the growing reputation of the Welshman who will be looking to add to last year's league and cup double for which he won with the Dandenong Thunder.

### Northcote City



Preliminary final v SMFC this  
Sunday

Final Position (Regular Season):  
1st 13W 7D 2L 44PTS

Last Match: 2-1 Loss against  
Bentleigh Greens in first Prelimi-  
nary Final

Recent Form: WWDWL  
Coach: Goran Lozanovski  
Star Player: Milos Lujic

What a ride it has been for Northcote this season. From going unde-

feated for the first fourteen matches of the season to losing at home against a Southern Stars side who hadn't won a match by round 18 (that match has since been awarded as a zero for both sides) to finishing on top of the table to losing in the first Prelim, it has been a real roller coaster for coach Goran Lozanovski and his troops.

If you had asked anyone who followed Victorian football at the half way mark of the season who would be the eventual premiers come October then I'm sure 85-90% of them would've said Northcote City, now that notion is seeming less and less likely. Yes they are still very much in the hunt for their first ever Victorian Premier League crown and may well prove me wrong but of the three teams still remaining they are probably, I'm my opinion, the least likely to win it.

This is not to say that they are by any means going to go down without a fight and will need key personnel such as 2013 VPL Golden Boot winner Milos Lujic and fellow strike partner James Kalafatidis firing on all cylinders if they are to topple a South Melbourne side who have been in top form in the run in to the finals.

Another very important member

of this side is speedy front man Dean Piemonte who returned from injury last weekend all be it from the bench against Bentleigh and will most certainly be a welcomed addition to the starting eleven should he be fully fit come Sunday.

Regardless of the result though 2013 has been Northcote City's best ever at the top level of Victorian Football with Coach Goran Lozanovski having masterminded the club to its first ever VPL minor premiership on the way so in many ways it has already been a season to remember for all Northcote City fans.

### South Melbourne FC



Preliminary Final v Northcote  
this Sunday

Final Position (Regular Season):  
4th 9W 6D 7L 31PTS

Last Match: 1-0 Win against Mel-  
bourne Knights in Semi Final

Recent Form: LDWWW  
Coach: Chris Taylor  
Star Player: Bryan Bran

What more could South Melbourne fans have asked for from Chris Taylor this season?

Having joined half way through the campaign from 2012 title winners Dandenong Thunder in the midst of a player crisis which saw skipper Luke Byles, vice-captain Joe Keenan, Tom Matthews and eventually Marinos Gasparis shown the door against the wishes of their coach Gus Tsolakis prompting almost a full scale revolt in the dressing room eventually leading to the resignation of Tsolakis.

And despite a slow blending process which included a 4-1 pounding at the hands of Bentleigh in Round 14 along with disappointing draws against Richmond and Southern Stars, Taylor has instigated a revival which has seen the club go from potentially missing out on the finals all together to playing in their first preliminary final since 2006, the last time the club won the Victorian Premier League.

Crucial to that success has been a number of key signings who have all made a major contribution since Taylor's arrival with towering defender Bryan Bran having playing a starring role since his mid-season transfer from Dandenong. The former Thunder big man has formed a great partnership with Shaun Kelly at the heart of the Hellas defence over recent weeks with the team now having kept three clean sheets in a row, something which the team could rarely do over the year and a half of the Tsolakis reign in charge.

Another key performer has been goalkeeper Peter Gavalas who was recently awarded with the 2013 Theo Marmaras Medal for Most Valuable Player of the year as his stunning performances especially over the back half of the season having been crucial to the success of the four time national champions.

And with Trent Rixon finally beginning to bang in the goals following an injury and suspension interrupted first year and a half at the club, there is every possibility that Hellas may upset the odds once again this season and advance to the 2013 grand final.

May the best side win.

Brandon Galgano (@Bgalgano94)



## Boo's World

Mark Boric

Another long off-season for the A-League, but the wait for action is finally over. It was so long Ljubo Milicevic had time to come back out of the wilderness, revive his career with Melbourne Knights in the VPL, get picked up by Perth Glory and then leave spectacularly on the eve of the season.

Which reminds me of another often maligned pair, Harry Kewell and David Carney. It would have been inaccurate to refer to them as professional footballers for the last 18 months, as by definition that requires you to be paid for playing football. Out of the blue, via rumoured trials at clubs all



Glory players put in the pre-season hard yards with a pole dancing class.  
Photo: EDUARDO MORGAN

over the world but mainly those ending in "stan", Carney signed for New York Red Bulls in the MLS. And lo and behold after just a couple of games he was back in Socceroos contention, to the bemusement of many.

Harry Kewell is not just back playing, but back in Melbourne, though this time at Heart not Victory. Still looks sharp and has enough quality to suggest he could be booking a ticket to

Rio after a solid couple of games under his belt as well.

Adelaide United are trying to play like Barcelona apparently. We won't get a real gauge on how Central Coast Mariners will fare in defending their crown until the mid-season transfer window, when we can see which players they have been able to retain. Nathan Burns is back in the A-League, joining Newcastle Jets who will be missing the injured Emile Heskey early in the season, and should get a good view of Ruben Zadkovich spraying shots into Row Z's at grounds all over the country.

All the letters in Michael Theo's name have survived this pre-season, the Brisbane Roar keeper resisting the urge to drop the O and just have The #1 on the back of his shirt. Over the ditch Wellington have Ernie Merrick as their new gaffer, which makes many Victory fans

snigger.

In the Sydney scene it looks like the Wanderers will remain their leading light, with FC already suffering a lengthy injury list before a ball has even been kicked in anger. Corey Gameiro couldn't even film a simple Fox Sports promo without being crocked.

Of course in in Victoria, it was not a quiet off-season. The FFV was dragged into court by disgruntled clubs over its implementation of the NPL. The first visit was to determine whether the matter would be heard in the Magistrate's Court, the Supreme Court or the International War Crimes Tribunal at The Hague as a result of the perceived ethnic cleansing the governing body was being accused of. The saga will continue, in the Supreme Court after Monday's verdict from Chief Magistrate Mr. Peter Lauritsen

Live Aussie football returns to SBS with the network picking up the rights for Friday night A-League games. This in turn has set up an epic battle between SBS and Fox as to who can boast having the successor to Mel Maclaughlin as Queen of the A-League as Lucy Zelic and Tara Rushton go head to head (minds out of the gutter boys). Let the games begin!

AGAINST ALL ODDS  
A-League Title 2013/14

\$4.33	Central Coast
\$4.50	Wanderers
\$5.50	Melbourne Victory
\$6.50	Brisbane Roar
\$7.50	Sydney FC
\$11	Adelaide United
\$13	Perth Glory
\$17	Melbourne Heart
\$23	Wellington Phoenix
\$23	Newcastle Jets

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REFSWORLD

# Aussie Abroad

## James Meyer *Pune FC (India)*

James Meyer (born 28 May 1986) is a former Brisbane Roar striker who now plays for Pune FC in the I-League.



### 1. How did you end up at your present club?

I got a call asking if I would be interested in playing in India. I said yes, and a few days later I had an offer.

### 2. How's the season treating you so far?

We have a few weeks left before the season starts. Pre-season has been good. Coach has worked us hard and set his expectations high, which I think the team has embraced and is striving to achieve.

### 3. What's the standard like over there?

The standard is quite good and it's getting better. There's quite a lot of young local players with a lot of potential, which is a good sign for the future.

### 4. What are the home town fans like? Do they know their football?

We haven't had much interaction with the fans in terms of game day yet,

our preseason games have mostly been played behind closed doors, but the online reaction from them has been positive.

### 5. What's the plan of attack for the immediate future?

Immediate future is to have a good start to the season, which will be difficult. Our first 3 games are away. It's a 2 1/2 week round trip with a lot of travelling and some of the best supported teams in India.

### 6. And the grand plan beyond?

Grand plan this season is to win at least 1 trophy

### 7. What do you miss most about Oz?

Family/friends

### 8. What do you miss least about Oz?

How expensive it is.

### 9. What do you like most about your present city of residence?

Access to Rickshaws. Their cheap and it's fun haggling for a good price. Even though I still get overcharges because I'm quite clearly foreign.

### 10. What do you like least about your present city of residence?

The horn honking. It's constant and a lot of the trucks have air-horns. If you're stuck in traffic it can be really frustrating.

### 11. Do you keep a track of the A-League? How do you follow it?

I follow by an app on my phone and obviously I'm still in contact with some of the boys I've played with.

### 12. Is it on your radar to play there again one day?

Maybe one day it would be nice to return but for now I'm in India and that's where

I'll be concentrating my efforts.

### 13. Earliest football memory?

Earliest football memory would be when I was 5 or 6 and I was first introduced to football. I played for my local team and I remember tripping over and falling onto the heel of my teammate, knocking myself out and probably stopped him from scoring.

### 14. Favourite football memory?

Grand Final 2010/11 with Roar. That was a special day and a great match. And the noise when Henrique scored the last penalty was unforgettable.

### 15. How can Australia win the World Cup?

If they beat the other 31 teams?

### 16. Advice to youngsters...

Work harder than anyone else and stay humble.

## NPL process heads for the Supreme Court

By Paul Mavroudis

Last Monday, the group of clubs – now numbering 61 – opposed to Football Federation Victoria's National Premier League model had two significant wins in the Magistrates' Court.

The clubs were successful in having their injunction against the FFV advancing further with its NPL model upheld. Chief Magistrate Peter Lauritsen also granted the application for the matter to be moved to the Supreme Court.

Prior to the dissenting clubs applying for the injunction, the FFV had been set to announce the successful bidders for an NPL Victoria licence on September 30th. The court ruling now means that the FFV are "prevented from taking any further step towards establishing, organising or implementing the NPL in 2014 or beyond."

It's the latest development in a dispute which has seen the two sides become increasingly hostile towards each other. Attempts at mediation to resolve the dispute before it reached the courts were an abject failure. Apart from the legal ramifications of the magistrate's decision, the court win has also boosted the credibility of the dissenting clubs and their reform agenda.

The dispute has escalated gradually over the past year. Initially clubs were fiercely divided by the FFV's proposed model. Some, such as Melbourne Knights and Green Gully, were opposed almost from the start. Others, such as South Melbourne, had been prepared to work with the FFV, believing that they could achieve significant compromises to the model. Bulleen Lions, one of the strongest junior clubs in the state, is still preparing to proceed with its attempt to join the NPL.

The dispute between the two sides centres on several facets of the FFV's model. Among these are the proposed zone system; the prohibition of NPL licensees to operate small sided games components; the splitting of clubs into 'elite' and 'community' groupings; the forced inclusion of women's teams into a licence agreement; disagreement about what the actual cost of running an NPL side will be; the lack of a marketing and sponsorship plan by the FFV; the FFV's apparent preference for consortia over clubs; and the status of being a licensee rather than an affiliate of the FFV.

The relevant clubs and some zone representatives are also unhappy with the lack of ability to call an EGM at the FFV to remove the present board. The argument is that while constitutional changes made in the wake of the Crawford Report allowed participants more rights at their own clubs, the same democratic principles have not been rolled out to the FFV itself.

The magistrate's decision will likely mean that an NPL Victoria

model – at least in the form that the FFV had been proposing – will not be able to begin in 2014, with at least two candidates out of the 15 license bidders, the Northern Raiders and West Side Strikers, apparently claiming that any delays to the NPL Victoria roll-out would prevent them from being ready for a 2014 start.

Whether this latest development forces a situation in which the two sides can at last come together and have meaningful dialogue – and avoid the very expensive Supreme Court proceedings – remains to be seen.. There are also those who are waiting and/or hoping for the FFA to finally step in to mediate the dispute. Among some Victorian soccer constituents, the failure or reluctance of the FFA to intervene has been a major failure, and one of the reasons that the dispute has become so bitter and protracted. Apart from the chaos caused by the Southern Stars betting scandal – which has not been resolved as yet either in the courts, nor in the FFV's tribunal system – the possibility of no NPL Victoria going ahead in 2014 has sown further confusion about what Victorian soccer's league pyramid will look like next year. There is also the unresolved fate of Sunshine George Cross, who were punished for an incident against Heidelberg with demotion from State League 1 down to State League 2. George Cross – who are the backers of the West Side Strikers consortium mentioned earlier - are looking to appeal that decision.

In addition to the uncertainty created for clubs at the top of the Victorian league system, there are also consequences for clubs further down the pyramid who had been using 2013 as preparation for the 2014 NPL Victoria season. Among these are prospective NPL Victoria candidates Ballarat Red Devils, who fielded a youthful line-up in 2013 which saw them finish in the relegation zone. In addition,

The failure to implement an NPL model of any sort in 2014 would see Victoria as the only state to have not done so. While most states began implementing an NPL model in 2013, others, such as Western Australia and Victoria, were due to begin their own NPL implementation in 2014. After a similarly fraught process in Western Australia, that state will implement its NPL model in 2014, having gone through the process of announcing the successful bidders.

Unlike the continued unity shown by the dissenting clubs in Victoria, the failure of Western Australian clubs to maintain a sense of unity been described by some observers as a key reason for the failure of their opposition the NPL reforms in that state.

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**Couch Potato** \* ALL TIMES ARE AEDT**SETANTA**  
SPORTS**SATURDAY 12TH OCTOBER**  
World Cup Qualifier UEFA - Group A  
Croatia v Belgium 2:50am LIVEWorld Cup Qualifier UEFA - Group H  
England v Montenegro 5:45am LIVEWorld Cup Qualifier CONMEBOL  
Ecuador v Uruguay 7:55am LIVEWorld Cup Qualifier CONMEBOL  
Colombia v Chile 10:00am 1st AiringWorld Cup Qualifier UEFA - Group G  
Greece v Slovakia 11:50am 1st AiringWorld Cup Qualifier UEFA - Group C  
Germany v Republic of Ireland  
1:40pm 1st AiringWorld Cup Qualifier CONMEBOL  
Venezuela v Paraguay 3:30pm 1st AiringWorld Cup Qualifier UEFA European  
Highlights Show 7:10pm 1st AiringSky Bet League Two Round 11  
Plymouth v Portsmouth 10:15pm LIVE  
on setantasportsplus.com**SUNDAY 13TH OCTOBER**

Sky Bet League Two Round 11 Plymouth v Portsmouth 7:50am 1st Airing

Scottish League One Round 9 Dunfermline v Rangers 9:40am 1st Airing

**MONDAY 14TH OCTOBER**  
Sky Bet League One Round 11 Coventry v Sheff Utd 1:55am LIVE

Skrill Premier Round 15 Barnet v Wrexham 4:00am 1st Airing

Primera Division Round 11 Teams TBC 8:05am LIVE

Primera Division Round 11 Teams TBC 11:10am LIVE

**WEDNESDAY 16TH OCTOBER**  
World Cup Qualifier UEFA Teams TBC 2:50am LIVE

World Cup Qualifier UEFA Teams TBC 5:55am LIVE

World Cup Qualifier UEFA Teams TBC 8:00am 1st Airing

World Cup Qualifier CONMEBOL Teams TBC 10:25am LIVE

World Cup Qualifier CONMEBOL Teams TBC 12:40pm 1st Airing

World Cup Qualifier CONMEBOL Teams TBC 2:30pm 1st Airing

World Cup Qualifier CONMEBOL Teams TBC 4:20pm 1st Airing

World Cup Qualifier UEFA Teams TBC 6:10pm 1st Airing

World Cup Qualifier UEFA European Highlights Show 8:00pm 1st Airing

**FRIDAY 18TH OCTOBER**  
Skrill Premier Round 16 Macclesfield v Southport 5:40am LIVE

Bundesliga Round 9 Preview Show 7:00pm 1st Airing

**SBS ONE**  
Friday October 11th  
7:00 pm A-League Live – Round 1: Sydney FC v Newcastle JetsSaturday, 12 October  
9:45 am World Cup 2014 Qualifier: Argentina v Peru - LiveSunday October 13th  
4:30 pm UEFA Champions League MagazineMonday October 14th  
4:30 pm FIFA Futbol Mundial  
11:00 pm The World GameThursday October 17th  
8:30 pm Thursday FC  
11:00 pm UEFA Champions League Magazine**SBS TWO**  
Monday October 14th  
8:40 pm A-League Highlights ShowTuesday October 15th  
5:00 pm A-League Highlights Show**FOX SPORTS****ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE LIVE**

Times listed are 7 minutes prior to kick-offs.

**WEEK 9**  
October 12-15.  
No matches scheduled due to international fixtures.**WEEK 10**  
Sat Oct 19 Newcastle v Liverpool  
10:35 pm Fox 1Sun Oct 20 Chelsea v Cardiff  
12:50 am Fox 1Sun Oct 20 Arsenal v Norwich  
12:50 am Viewers ChoiceSun Oct 20 Manchester United v Southampton  
12:50 am Viewers ChoiceSun Oct 20 Everton v Hull  
12:50 am Viewers ChoiceSun Oct 20 Swansea v Sunderland  
12:50 am Viewers ChoiceSun Oct 20 Stoke v West Brom  
12:50 am Fox Sports News (TBC)Sun Oct 20 West Ham v Manchester City  
3:20 am Fox 1Mon Oct 21 Aston Villa v Tottenham  
1:50 am Fox 1Tue Oct 22 Crystal Palace v Fulham  
5:50 am Fox 1**HYUNDAI A-LEAGUE - ALL GAMES LIVE**Fri Oct 11 Sydney FC v Jets 7:30 pm  
Sat Oct 12 Mariners v Wanderers 5:30 pm  
Sat Oct 12 Victory v Heart 7:30 pm  
Sun Oct 13 Phoenix v Brisbane 3:00 pm  
Sun Oct 13 Perth v Adelaide 5:00 pm**FOX SPORTS FC**  
Every Tuesday 8:30 pm**INTERNATIONAL FRIENDLY**Saturday 12 October  
France v Australia 5:30 am Fox 1**A-League Finally Arrives on Free-To-Air TV****TV Heaven****Matthew Naqvi**

Spring is here and that means that it is football time again! The A-League opening round begins this weekend, W-League is around the corner and the international leagues are all up and running. We have all been waiting for the round ball to take centre stage and it is time!

The ninth season of A-League is about to get underway and October 11th sees Sydney FC vs Newcastle Jets as the kick off game for the season on Fox at 7:30 pm and SBS 2 at 7 pm. The fans will be eagerly watching Alessandro Del Piero weave his magic against the Jets defence; unfortunately Emile Heskey won't be out on the pitch too.

October 12th sees the big rivalry between Melbourne Victory and Melbourne Heart at 7:30 pm. Victory will be looking to get off the best possible start with a big win over the 'other' Victorian side in the big derby. The game will be an intense and exciting battle as Victory takes on their former marquee signing and new Heart captain Harry Kewell. Hopefully Victory take home the points and some of the new signings make a great impression.

The grand final replay on Saturday at 5:30 pm will be a fiercely contested battle with Western Sydney Wanderers out to get some revenge on reigning premiers Central Coast Mariners. Sunday 3 pm sees Wellington Phoenix against Brisbane Roar, while Perth Glory takes on Adelaide United at 5 pm. Fox has coverage of all A-League games to give you your local football fix.

The big international friendly



A life-long sports buff, Lucy Zelic is already well known amongst football fans as the host of the Official Hyundai A-League Podcast and is a seasoned radio presenter, appearing on the popular Balls 'n' All football show on 106.3FM and commentating games for Canberra United in the Westfield W-League. Lucy is also a former Miss Universe Australia finalist and hails from a sports loving family along with her brother, former Socceroo and SBS Football Analyst Ned Zelic.

between Australia and France is on Saturday at 5:30 am on Fox 1. Holger Osieck has opted to play more of our younger player's in this game and it will be vital for their development and chances of game time in Brazil. Hopefully Mitch Langerak and co can make an impressive showing and push for selection in the World Cup.

Setsanta Sports has plenty of World Cup Qualifiers on offer Saturday 12th. Ecuador vs Uruguay live at 7:55 am and Germany vs Republic of Ireland at 1:40 pm.

SBS is also introducing a new weekly entertainment program that will hopefully bring in lots of football fans as well as a broader audience with its mix of football

news, music and interviews. Thursday FC will be hosted by comedian Matt Okine and football presenters Lucy Zelic and David Zdrilic. The show starts 10th October at 8:30 pm on SBS 2.

To wrap it all up, SBS is bringing a new show on Monday night at 8:30 pm called The A-League Highlights Show. Chief Football Analyst Craig Foster will deliver a comprehensive review of the opening weekend's A-League action.

As always, The World Game is on SBS at 11 pm, not the greatest time slot for fans but at least it is on TV.

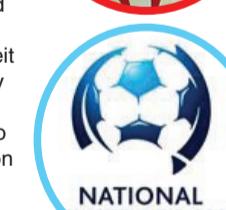
Until next week, stay tuned!

**Hot or Not****By Alvaro Rodriguez**

As if it really needs to be said, but the very fact the A-League is back of course!!!

I know it's said almost every year, but rightfully this is being touted as potentially the best season yet in the league's eight-year history: almost all the clubs have recruited solidly in the off-season (Harry Kewell's return to Melbourne, albeit in the colours of Heart is the spicy subplot to the Melbourne Derby) and it's particularly encouraging to see clubs like Perth and Wellington giving more local-youth spots in their rosters.

Add to this confirmation of the FFA Cup kicking off next year and the prospect of both Western Sydney Wanderers and Ange Postecoglou's Victory side giving the Asian Champions League a fair shake, it's fair to say the future looks reasonably bright for the local scene - all the more so given the lead-up to next year's World Cup in Brazil. Just bring on Round 1 already!!



For all the positives in the local scene however, the situation regarding Holger Osieck's stewardship of the Socceroos has reached breaking-point; sub-par performances (never mind losses!) against France and Canada in the coming week are almost bound to see him booted from the national hot-seat. Whilst of course we are grateful for having gotten us to Brazil, his stubborn refusal to blood the national team's Generation Next is both perplexing and scandalous - as a result, Australia's set to boast the oldest-average squad of all 32 qualified nations next year.

The other blights on the local front are the situation regarding court-action pertaining to Football Federation Victoria and its handling of the state's mooted transition to a National Premier League 'VIC branch' to replace the existing VPL comp; and the decidedly heavy-handed approach mooted by authorities to curb minority rogue-elements within the Victory's active-support base. As I don't wish to delve into minute details, let me leave you with this analogy: you don't need a nuclear bomb to fumigate your house. Make of that what you will!

**Friday Night Football On SBS**Round 1 Friday 11 October  
Sydney FC v Newcastle JetsRound 2 Friday 18 October  
Adelaide Utd v Melbourne VictoryRound 3 Friday 25 October  
Melbourne Victory v Brisbane RoarRound 4 Friday 1 November  
Wanderers v Adelaide UnitedRound 5 Friday 8 November  
Melbourne Heart v WanderersRound 6 Friday 15 November  
Melbourne Heart v Sydney FCRound 7 Friday November 22  
Brisbane Roar v WanderersRound 8 Friday November 29  
Mariners v Melbourne VictoryRound 9 Friday December 6  
Adelaide United v Brisbane RoarRound 10 Friday 13 December  
Melbourne Victory v Perth GloryRound 11 Friday 20 December  
Brisbane Roar v Newcastle JetsRound 12 Friday 27 December  
Melbourne Heart v PhoenixRound 13 Friday 3 January  
Adelaide United v Sydney FCRound 14 Friday 10 January  
Newcastle Jets v Melb VictoryRound 15 Friday 17 January  
Melbourne Heart v Newcastle JetsRound 16 Friday 24 January  
Brisbane Roar v PhoenixRound 17 Friday 31 January  
Melbourne Heart v Sydney FCRound 18 Friday 7 February  
Wanderers v Brisbane RoarRound 19 Friday 14 February  
Adelaide United v MarinersRound 20 Friday 21 February  
Mariners v Wellington PhoenixRound 21 Friday 28 February  
Brisbane Roar v Perth GloryRound 22 Friday March 7  
Melbourne Victory v MarinersRound 23 Friday March 14  
Sydney FC v Brisbane RoarRound 24 Friday March 21  
Adelaide United v Sydney FCRound 25 Friday 28 March  
Brisbane Roar v Melbourne HeartRound 26 Friday 4 April  
Adelaide United v Melbourne HeartRound 27 Friday 11 April  
Newcastle Jets v Adelaide United

# Real Futbol Institute

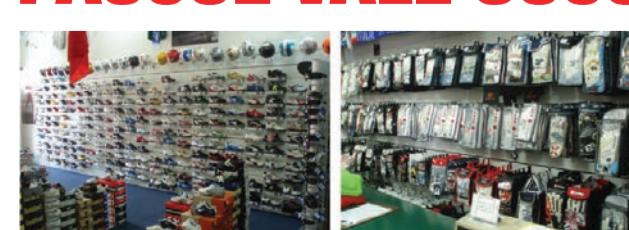
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Round 1	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT	Round 15	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Oct 11	Sydney FC - Newcastle Jets	Allianz Stadium	4:30 PM	5:00 PM	Fri Jan 17	Melbourne Heart v Newcastle Jets	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sat Oct 12	CC Mariners v West Sydney Wanderers	Bluetongue Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM	Fri Jan 17	Perth Glory v Brisbane Roar	TBC	6:45 PM	9:45 PM
Sat Oct 12	Melbourne Victory v Melbourne Heart	Etihad Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sat Jan 18	Wellington Phoenix v Melbourne Victory	Westpac Stadium	7:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sun Oct 13	Wellington Phoenix v Brisbane Roar	Westpac Stadium	5:00 PM	3:00 PM	Sat Jan 18	Sydney FC v Central Coast Mariners	Allianz Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Oct 13	Adelaide United v Perth Glory	Coopers stadium	2:00 PM	5:00 PM	Sun Jan 19	Adelaide United v West Sydney Wanderers	Hindmarsh Stadium	4:30 PM	5:00 PM
Round 2	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT	Round 16	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Oct 18	Adelaide United v Melbourne Victory	Hindmarsh Stadium	7:00 PM	7:30 PM	Fri Jan 24	Brisbane Roar v Wellington Phoenix	Suncorp Stadium	7:00 PM	8:00 PM
Sat Oct 19	Melbourne Heart v Central Coast Mariners	AAMI Park	5:30 PM	5:30 PM	Sat Jan 25	Adelaide United v Melbourne Heart	Hindmarsh Stadium	5:00 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Oct 19	Brisbane Roar v Sydney FC	Suncorp Stadium	6:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sat Jan 25	Central Coast Mariners v Newcastle Jets	Bluetongue Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Oct 20	Newcastle Jets v Perth Glory	Hunter Stadium	3:00 PM	3:00 PM	Sun Jan 26	Melbourne Victory v Sydney FC	Etihad Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM
Sun Oct 20	West Sydney Wanderers v Wellington Phoenix	Parramatta Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM	Sun Jan 26	West Sydney Wanderers v Perth Glory	Parramatta Stadium	7:00 PM	7:00 PM
Round 3	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT	Round 17	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Oct 25	Melbourne Victory v Brisbane Roar	Etihad Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Fri Jan 31	Melbourne Heart v Sydney FC	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sat Oct 26	Central Coast Mariners v Adelaide United	Bluetongue Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM	Fri Jan 31	Perth Glory v Melbourne Victory	NIB stadium	6:45 PM	9:45 PM
Sat Oct 26	Sydney FC v West Sydney Wanderers	Allianz Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sat Feb 1	Wellington Phoenix v Adelaide United	Eden Park, Auckland	7:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sun Oct 27	Wellington Phoenix v Newcastle Jets	McLean Park, Napier	5:00 PM	3:00 PM	Sat Feb 1	Newcastle Jets v West Sydney Wanderers	Hunter Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Oct 27	Perth Glory v Melbourne Heart	NIB stadium	2:00 PM	5:00 PM	Sun Feb 2	Brisbane Roar v Central Coast Mariners	Suncorp Stadium	4:00 PM	5:00 PM
Round 4	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT	Round 18	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Nov 1	West Sydney Wanderers v Adelaide United	Parramatta Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Fri Feb 7	West Sydney Wanderers v Brisbane Roar	Parramatta Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sat Nov 2	Perth Glory v Sydney FC	NIB stadium	2:30 PM	5:30 PM	Sat Feb 8	Central Coast Mariners v Melbourne Victory	Bluetongue Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Nov 2	Newcastle Jets v Central Coast Mariners	Hunter Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sat Feb 8	Sydney FC v Adelaide United	Allianz Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Nov 3	Brisbane Roar v Melbourne Heart	Suncorp Stadium	4:00 PM	5:00 PM	Sun Feb 9	Melbourne Heart v Perth Glory	TBC	3:00 PM	3:00 PM
Mon Nov 4	Melbourne Victory v Wellington Phoenix	Etihad Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sun Feb 9	Newcastle Jets v Wellington Phoenix	Hunter Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM
Round 5	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT	Round 19	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Nov 8	Melbourne Heart v West Sydney Wanderers	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Fri Feb 14	Adelaide United v Central Coast Mariners	Hindmarsh Stadium	7:00 PM	7:30 PM
Sat Nov 9	Wellington Phoenix v Perth Glory	AMI Stadium, Christchurch	5:30 PM	3:30 PM	Sat Feb 15	Sydney FC v Perth Glory	Allianz Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Nov 9	Adelaide United v Newcastle Jets	Hindmarsh Stadium	5:00 PM	5:30 PM	Sat Feb 15	Melbourne Victory v West Sydney Wanderers	TBC	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Nov 9	Sydney FC v Melbourne Victory	Allianz Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sun Feb 16	Wellington Phoenix v Melbourne Heart	Westpac Stadium	5:00 PM	3:00 PM
Sun Nov 10	Central Coast Mariners v Brisbane Roar	Bluetongue Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM	Sun Feb 16	Brisbane Roar v Newcastle Jets	Suncorp Stadium	4:00 PM	5:00 PM
Round 6	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT	Round 20	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Nov 15	Melbourne Heart v Sydney FC	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Fri Feb 21	Central Coast Mariners v Wellington Phoenix	Bluetongue Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sat Nov 16	Perth Glory v Adelaide United	nib Stadium	2:30 PM	5:30 PM	Sat Feb 22	Newcastle Jets v Sydney FC	Hunter Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Nov 16	West Sydney Wanderers v Melbourne Victory	Parramatta Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sat Feb 22	Melbourne Victory v Adelaide United	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Nov 17	Newcastle Jets v Brisbane Roar	Hunter Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM	Sat Feb 22	Perth Glory v West Sydney Wanderers	nib Stadium	6:30 PM	9:30 PM
Thu Dec 19	Central Coast Mariners v Wellington Phoenix	North Sydney Oval	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sun Feb 23	Melbourne Heart v Brisbane Roar	AAMI Park	5:00 PM	5:00 PM
Round 7	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT	Round 21	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Nov 22	Brisbane Roar v West Sydney Wanderers	Suncorp Stadium	7:00 PM	8:00 PM	Fri Feb 28	Brisbane Roar v Perth Glory	Suncorp Stadium	7:00 PM	8:00 PM
Sat Nov 23	Sydney FC v Wellington Phoenix	Allianz Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM	Sat Mar 1	Central Coast Mariners v Sydney FC	Bluetongue Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Nov 23	Melbourne Victory v Adelaide United	Etihad Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sat Mar 1	Melbourne Heart v Melbourne Victory	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sat Nov 23	Perth Glory v Central Coast Mariners	nib Stadium	6:30 PM	9:30 PM	Sun Mar 2	Adelaide United v Wellington Phoenix	Hindmarsh Stadium	2:30 PM	3:00 PM
Sun Nov 24	Newcastle Jets v Melbourne Heart	Hunter Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM	Sun Mar 2	West Sydney Wanderers v Newcastle Jets	Parramatta Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM
Round 8	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT	Round 22	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Nov 29	Central Coast Mariners v Melbourne Victory	Bluetongue Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Fri Mar 7	Melbourne Victory v Central Coast Mariners	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sat Nov 30	Brisbane Roar v Perth Glory	Suncorp Stadium	4:30 PM	5:30 PM	Sat Mar 8	Newcastle Jets v Melbourne Heart	Hunter Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Nov 30	Sydney FC v Newcastle Jets	Allianz Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sat Mar 8	Sydney FC v West Sydney Wanderers	Allianz Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Dec 1	Wellington Phoenix v West Sydney Wanderers	Westpac Stadium	5:00 PM	3:00 PM	Sun Mar 9	Wellington Phoenix v Perth Glory	Westpac Stadium	5:00 PM	3:00 PM
Sun Dec 1	Melbourne Heart v Adelaide United	AAMI Park	5:00 PM	5:00 PM	Sun Mar 9	Brisbane Roar v Adelaide United	Suncorp Stadium	4:00 PM	5:00 PM
Round 9	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT	Round 23	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Dec 6	Adelaide United v Brisbane Roar	Hindmarsh Stadium	7:00 PM	7:30 PM	Fri Mar 14	Sydney FC v Brisbane Roar	Allianz Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Fri Dec 6	Perth Glory v Wellington Phoenix	NIB stadium	6:45 PM	9:45 PM	Sat Mar 15	West Sydney v Wanderers Adelaide United	Parramatta Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Dec 7	West Sydney Wanderers v Melbourne Heart	Parramatta Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM	Sat Mar 15	Central Coast Mariners v Newcastle Jets	Bluetongue Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sat Dec 7	Central Coast Mariners v Sydney FC	Bluetongue Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sat Mar 15	Perth Glory v Melbourne Victory	NIB stadium	6:30 PM	9:30 PM
Sun Dec 8	Melbourne Victory v Newcastle Jets	AAMI Park	5:00 PM	5:00 PM	Sun Mar 16	Melbourne Heart v Wellington Phoenix	AAMI Park	4:00 PM	4:00 PM
Round 10	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT	Round 24	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Dec 13	Melbourne Victory v Perth Glory	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Fri Mar 21	Adelaide United v Sydney FC	Hindmarsh Stadium	7:00 PM	7:30 PM
Sat Dec 14	Wellington Phoenix v Brisbane Roar	Westpac Stadium	5:30 PM	3:30 PM	Sat Mar 22	Newcastle Jets v Wellington Phoenix	Hunter Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Dec 14	Adelaide United v Central Coast Mariners	Hindmarsh Stadium	5:00 PM	5:30 PM	Sat Mar 22	Brisbane Roar v Melbourne Victory	Suncorp Stadium	6:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Dec 15	Newcastle Jets v West Sydney Wanderers	Hunter Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sun Mar 23	Melbourne Heart v Central Coast Mariners	AAMI Park	3:00 PM	3:00 PM
Sun Dec 15	Sydney FC v Melbourne Heart	Allianz Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM	Sun Mar 23	West Sydney Wanderers v Perth Glory	Parramatta Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM
Round 11	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT	Round 25	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Fri Dec 20	Brisbane Roar v Newcastle Jets	TBC	7:00 PM	8:00 PM	Fri Mar 28	Brisbane Roar v Melbourne Heart	Suncorp Stadium	7:00 PM	8:00 PM
Sat Dec 21	Melbourne Heart v Melbourne Victory	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sat Mar 29	Wellington Phoenix v Adelaide United	Westpac Stadium	5:30 PM	3:30 PM
Sun Dec 22	Wellington Phoenix v Sydney FC	Westpac Stadium	7:00 PM	5:00 PM	Sat Mar 29	Central Coast Mariners v West Sydney Wanderers	Bluetongue Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sun Dec 22	Perth Glory v Adelaide United	nib Stadium	4:00 PM	7:00 PM	Sat Mar 29	Melbourne Victory v Sydney FC	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Mon Dec 23	West Sydney Wanderers v Central Coast Mariners	Parramatta Stadium	7:00 PM	7:00 PM	Sun Mar 30	Perth Glory v Newcastle Jets	NIB stadium	2:00 PM	5:00 PM
Round 12	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT	Round 26	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Thu Dec 26	Sydney FC v Brisbane Roar	Allianz Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Fri Apr 4	Adelaide United v Melbourne Heart	Hindmarsh Stadium	7:00 PM	7:30 PM
Fri Dec 27	Melbourne Heart v Wellington Phoenix	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sat Apr 5	Newcastle Jets v Melbourne Victory	Hunter Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Dec 28	Melbourne Victory v West Sydney Wanderers	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sat Apr 5	West Sydney Wanderers v Brisbane Roar	Parramatta Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Dec 29	Adelaide United v Newcastle Jets	Hindmarsh Stadium	4:30 PM	5:00 PM	Sat Apr 5	Perth Glory v Central Coast Mariners	NIB stadium	6:30 PM	9:30 PM
Tue Dec 31	Central Coast Mariners v Perth Glory	Bluetongue Stadium	6:00 PM	6:00 PM	Sun Apr 6	Sydney FC v Wellington Phoenix	Allianz Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM
Round 13	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT	Round 27	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT
Wed Jan 1	West Sydney Wanderers v Wellington Phoenix	Parramatta Stadium	7:00 PM	7:00 PM	Fri Apr 11	Newcastle Jets v Adelaide United	Hunter Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Fri Jan 3	Adelaide United v Sydney FC	Hindmarsh Stadium	7:00 PM	7:30 PM	Sat Apr 12	Wellington Phoenix v Melbourne Victory	Westpac Stadium	5:30 PM	3:30 PM
Sat Jan 4	Newcastle Jets v Perth Glory	Hunter Stadium	5:30 PM	5:30 PM	Sat Apr 12	Melbourne Heart v West Sydney Wanderers	AAMI Park	5:30 PM	5:30 PM
Sat Jan 4	Melbourne Victory v Brisbane Roar	AAMI Park	7:30 PM	7:30 PM	Sat Apr 12	Brisbane Roar v Central Coast Mariners	Suncorp Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM
Sun Jan 5	Central Coast Mariners v Melbourne Heart	Bluetongue Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM	Sun Apr 13	Sydney FC v Perth Glory	Allianz Stadium	5:00 PM	5:00 PM
Round 14	Fixture	Venue	Local	AEDT					
Fri Jan 10	Newcastle Jets v Melbourne Victory	Hunter Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM					
Fri Jan 10	Perth Glory v Melbourne Heart	NIB stadium	6:45 PM	9:45 PM					
Sat Jan 11	Brisbane Roar v Adelaide United	Suncorp Stadium	4:30 PM	5:30 PM					
Sat Jan 11	West Sydney Wanderers v Sydney FC	Parramatta Stadium	7:30 PM	7:30 PM					
Sun Jan 12	Wellington Phoenix v Central Coast Mariners	Westpac Stadium	7:00 PM	5:00 PM					

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# Pascoe Vale FC leads the field after Round 3



## Albert Park Futsal Club 3 - 7 Fitzroy Futsal Club

AP: J. Vasquez, E. Mutabazi, T. Pham  
FTZ: M. Burton 3, I. Altuntas, A. Dunlop, A. Fusca, A. Granollers

The first game to kick off the Round 3 action saw Albert Park look to claim their first points in the 2013/14 season against the fernando-less Fitzroy.

After Friday night's 11-2 thumping at the hands of the Vic Vipers, the Roy's were looking to redeem themselves against the lowly Albert Park. With Fernando away on a training camp for the Futsalroos, it seemed that the Fitzroy lads were going to cruise to the three points as a hat trick from veteran defender Mark Burton gifted them a 3-0 lead at the break.

Fitzroy's fine first half form continued into the second period as Ilhan Altuntas further extended the lead. But three goals in quick succession for Albert Park from Jose Vasquez, Elisee Mutabazi and Thao Pham made sure that Fitzroy didn't have everything their own way.

With the game in the balance, emotion got the better of Albert Park manager Michael Lam as he seemed to abuse an official which saw him sent off the pitch. This worked heavily in Fitzroy's favour as they reclaimed their stranglehold on the game to score three unanswered goals from Alistair Dunlop, Ange Fusca and Alejandro Granollers to record a well deserved 7-3 win.

It was a good comeback by Fitzroy who did well to stem the momentum of Albert Park to get back to winning ways, and to do it without Fernando will be a massive boost for manager Todd Miles. Albert Park on the other hand seem to be in a major spot of bother three rounds into the season and with other teams around them making quality signings to improve their squads, something needs to be done before it's too late.

## Mickleham Futsal Club 4 - 11 Pascoe Vale Futsal Club

MICK: I. Filipovic 3, V. Zoric  
PV: S. Soufi 3, L. Kruel 2, A. Caro, J. Da Silva, R. Armellini, M. Rocca, J. Tabarkiewicz, S. Castvan

The second game to take place for Round 3 was tipped to be a very one-sided affair as top placed Pascoe Vale went up against bottom placed Mickleham. Pascoe, boasting a quality, full strength bench made their opponents look like a mere social league side as Vlado Zoric's men could only manage the one substitute. The first half played out just as many had predicted, with Pascoe dictating terms to eventually earn a 4-1 half time lead. A double from Sofiane Soufi set the pace for Pascoe, while Lucas Kruel and an own goal from Steve Castvan made sure that Mickleham captain, Vlado Zoric's solitary strike remained a consolation goal. The second half saw the title favourites really flex their muscles as they boasted seven individual scorers in Soufi, Kruel, Andre Caro,



Ashburton's Ricky Castro can't believe his luck after scoring the winner in the dying seconds of the game, albeit with a bicycle kick.



Fitzroy's Mark Burton celebrates one of his first half goals with Jeremy Ortiz and Ange Fusca.



Pascoe Vale's Johnny Tabarkiewicz scores his side's eleventh goal in style.

goal to open up the action as Resit Culcoglu and Ricky Castro converted for their respective sides. Midway through the half, Hume had worked their way into the biggest lead of the game as Jordan Michaelis and Sahin scored from close range to make it a commanding 6-4 lead. Refusing to give up, Ashburton continued to play their attacking brand of futsal and they were soon rewarded as Covarrubias scored with less than five minutes on the clock to make up for his own goal in the first half. There was yet more drama to follow. As the

clock dwindled down to seconds, the ball was hoofed into the 'D' by Ashburton keeper Con Makris only for the redhot Ricky Castro to score from an unbelievable bicycle kick to level the scores at 6-6. It was an amazing finish to an amazing game, a draw being a fair result in the end. One point after three games was probably not the ideal start to a season if you are planning to make a genuine run at the title, so manager Amin Kedad will have to revitalise and refocus his

squad in the coming weeks to catch up to the ladder leaders. There are positive signs all around for Benny Geaboc and Ashburton who seem to have a new lease of life since their opening round one loss, with the signings of Covarrubias and McHeile playing a big part in their change of fortune.

Man of the Match: Ricky Castro (Ashburton)

## Standings

### NIKE V-LEAGUE Premiership

	P	W	L	B	D	F	A	F	Pts
1 Pascoe Vale FC	3	3	0	0	25	8	+17	9	
2 Vic Vipers FC	2	2	0	0	18	5	+13	6	
3 Metropolitan FC	2	2	0	0	17	7	+10	6	
4 Fitzroy FC	3	2	1	0	19	17	+2	6	
5 Ashburton FC	3	1	1	1	16	17	-1	4	
6 Hume FC	3	0	2	1	13	17	-4	1	
7 Albert Park FC	3	0	3	0	7	22	-15	0	
8 Mickleham FC	3	0	3	0	9	31	-22	0	

### Pepsi Women's WV-LEAGUE

	P	W	L	B	D	F	A	F	Pts
1 Pascoe Vale FC	2	2	0	0	22	3	+19	6	
2 Melbourne Uni FC	2	2	0	0	18	2	+16	6	
3 Ashburton FC	2	1	1	1	11	5	+6	4	
4 Fitzroy FC	2	1	1	0	12	13	-11	3	
5 Vic Vipers FC	2	0	2	0	7	7	+0	2	
6 F.C. Richmond	2	0	1	5	15	10	-1	1	
7 Heidelberg FC	2	0	2	0	1	8	-7	0	
8 E.F.A. Eagles	2	0	2	0	4	17	-13	0	

### State League One

	P	W	L	B	D	F	A	F	Pts
1 FC Collingwood	4	4	0	0	23	8	+15	12	
2 Brighton FC	4	3	1	0	24	10	+14	9	
3 CF South Melbourne	4	2	2	0	15	12	+3	6	
4 FC Hawthorn	4	2	2	0	13	11	+2	6	
5 Coburg Athletic	4	2	0	0	15	14	+1	6	
6 FC Prahran	4	1	2	0	13	17	-4	4	
7 Toorak FC	4	1	2	0	11	14	-2	1	
8 F.C. Footscray	4	0	4	0	0	17	41	-24	0

### State League Two

	P	W	L	B	D	F	A	F	Pts
1 Doncaster FC	4	4	0	0	24	8	+16	12	
2 Mcleod FC	4	3	1	0	21	17	+4	9	
3 FC Preston	4	3	1	0	16	12	+4	9	
4 FC Geelong	4	2	2	0	32	13	+19	6	
5 FC Richmond	4	2	2	0	25	23	+2	6	
6 Elsternwick FC	4	1	3	0	0	10	-4	3	
7 EFA Eagles	4	1	3	0	0	17	22	-5	3
8 FC St Kilda	4	0	4	0	0	16	29	-13	0

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## Slovakia



By Alvaro Rodriguez

**CAPITAL:** Bratislava

**POPULATION:** (2011 approx.)

5,445,324

**CONFEDERATION:** UEFA

**INTERNATIONAL HONOURS:** (As 1/2 of Czechoslovakia) World Cup runners-up 1934, 1962, Euro Championship winners 1976, third-place 1960, 1980; (as Slovakia) N/A

**FIFA WORLD RANKING:** 49th

**EURO FINALS APPEARANCES:** (As 1/2 of Czechoslovakia) 1960, 1976, 1980; (as Slovakia) N/A

**WORLD CUP APPEARANCES:** (As 1/2 of Czechoslovakia) 1934, 1938, 1954-62, 1970, 1982, 1990; (as Slovakia) 2010

### WHO ARE YA?

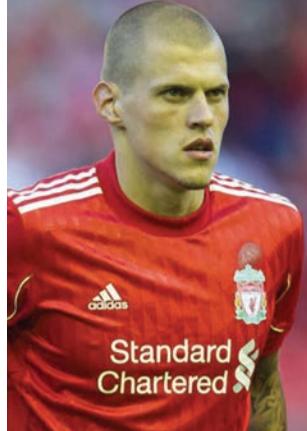
Situated in Central Europe, the Slovak Republic is bordered by five nations; most notably its fellow-half of now-defunct Czechoslovakia, the Czech Republic. The history of civilisation in the region stretches back some 270,000 years, but it was not until the era of 500 BC that Celtic tribes settled in the area, who were supplanted by Slavic clans a millennia later(500 AD). It was at that time too that the feared Huns, led by the famed warlord Attila, finally reneged on their centuries-long campaign of would-be conquest, although other Eurasian peoples would subsequently try to annex the region from its Slav inhabitants.

Influence from Germanic and Frankish(French) circles eventually led to the establishment of Great Moravia, the first actual nation-state on future Slovak soil. Despite patronage from both the Roman Catholic and Byzantine churches as a sign of sovereign recognition, Moravia was eventually annexed by Hungary in the 11th Century AD - an arrangement that ended only with WWI in 1918 nearly a full millennium later. During this time of absorption into Hungary the territory of Slovakia comprised a great deal of Hungary's geography and the future Slovak capital Bratislava(then known as Poszony in Magyar and Prespork in Slovak) actually served as Hungary's capital from 1536 till 1848!

The Austro-Hungarian Empire came into being in the 19th Century and retained Slovakia, much to the dismay of pro-independence Slovaks who had hoped the Austrian Emperor would cut Slovakia loose from the unwieldy confederation. When the Empire was disintegrated at WWI's end as per the Treaty of Versailles, virtually all of its subordinates were annexed by either the Kingdom of Yugoslavia or the new state of Czechoslovakia - given the close ethnic and linguistic ties between



Just in case the GPS isn't working...



Liverpool's Martin Škrtel



Slovak superstar Marek Hamšík chews the scenery in Napoli colours,



Lubomír Moravčík

goals, and at club level racking up 120 games and 17 goals for Real Oviedo after leaving the Bernabeu, before his tragic death in 2000 whilst holidaying in Thailand aged 28. Defender Dušan Tittel was a contemporary of his, also a youth-product of Slovan Bratislava albeit without the illustrious club-career of the former, ending up playing for French minnow Nîmes and Omonia Nicosia of Cyprus.

Lubomír Moravčík was the go-to man of the era however, a crafty midfielder with the technique to match. Dually-capped by Czechoslovakia and Slovakia, his club career took him as far afield as France, Germany, Scotland and Japan. In the last 10 years however, it is Miroslav Karhan and Martin Škrtel who have been flying the flag most prominently for Slovak football by virtue of their long service and varied club careers, the latter now in his sixth year at Liverpool.

However, the future(and present) of Slovak football is Napoli's mohawked wizard Marek Hamšík, another Slovan old-boy who has spent nearly a full decade in the cut-throat world of Serie A football, first with Brescia and since 2007 with the sky-blue Neapolitans, for whom he has amassed 224 games and 66 goals. At national-team level he has played 67 times and scored 11 goals for his country, and that's not counting his international-youth career where he was capped for Slovakia from Under-17 right through to Olympic level before stepping up to the seniors. All this already and yet he is still only 25 years old; many in global football circles believe his next club-move will maximise his potential, even if reaching the galactic heights of Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo already looks a bridge too far for him.

### SO WHAT NOW?

Sadly the Slovaks were recently eliminated from the Brazil 2014 quest, courtesy of Bosnia and Greece wrapping up European Group G of WC qualifiers by snaring its top 2 spots. Nevertheless, considering the modest wealth of prodigious talent Slovak football now boasts it is surely only a matter of time before Slovakia once again graces the finals of a major international tournament - the real question is whether they will then be able to step up to the next level.



Marek Hamsik in national colours with pennant and Slovakia team-mates.

logical that the Czechs would continue being the flag-bearers of their former shared legacy. In any case the Slovaks had gained their independence in the final year of USA '94 qualification, thus they would have to wait till the qualifying marathon for Euro '96 to make their major-tournament qualifying debut. Drawn in Group 1 of Euro qualifying alongside Romania and France, with Poland and Israel all providing stern tests for the Slovaks; they did well to finish third behind joint-qualifiers/group favourites France and Romania albeit six points behind; the highlight of the campaign being two solid 4-1 wins over group easybeats Azerbaijan and the respectable Poland.

France '98 qualifiers saw the dream match-up against their Czech brethren in Group 6, which also boasted Yugoslavia and then-eternal underachievers Spain. After double wins(2-1 and 3-0) against the Faroe Islands and a 6-0 demolition of Malta, the signs looked promising enough before a 4-1 loss to Spain deflated them; they backed up with a 2-0 win vs. Malta to preserve their perfect record against the islanders, but a 2-0 loss to Yugoslavia again knocked the wind out of their sails - but again, only for the moment. The biggest grudge match in the country's history was waiting in the wings, a veritable 'cometh the hour, cometh the man' occasion.

Thus the inaugural football showdown between former Czechoslovak-halves took place in Bratislava on August 24th 1997... with the Slovaks defying the odds to edge out their ex-countrymen 2-1 in a result that bruised more than a few egos back in Prague. Sadly the wheels would fall off the Slovak wagon, squandering a lead to Yugoslavia and failing to snatch a point from Spain in the following 2 games. The final qualifier would again be against the Czechs, and with both countries now out of the qualifying race it would be strictly for pride/bragging rights. This time the script went the Czechs' way triumphing 3-0, the two countries finishing 3rd and 4th respectively.

Euro 2000 qualifying saw Romania and Portugal progress through their group at the Slovaks' expense - a pity given the other nations in the group were easily within the Slovak NT's capabilities. That same year the Slovak U23 squad qualified for the Sydney Olympics, where they finished last in Group D with a sole win against South Africa to their name. For Korea/Japan 2002 the Slovaks were again slotted in a relatively-easy group with only Sweden and Turkey(who went on to qualify for their first WC finals since 1954) as their chief rivals; alas they conceded defeat to them. Much the same pattern characterised their Euro 2004 campaign, but things turned a corner in their bid to reach Germany '06; finishing 2nd in Group 3 to Turkey and edging out Russia

on goal-difference) to progress to the final play-offs for the first time. Alas, the dream died there and then as their opponents were none other than Spain; burying the Slovaks 6-2 on aggregate. To further the blow, any kindled hopes of reaching Euro 2008 were dashed upon being grouped with Germany, the Czechs and the Republic of Ireland, who predictably finished occupying the top 3 spots on the Group D ladder.

But in the end, the Slovaks got their day in the sun by reaching South Africa 2010 - and topping their group, thus via Slovenia's second placing denying the Czechs a place at the big dance. And so it was the Slovaks were drawn in Group F alongside reigning champs Italy, Paraguay and New Zealand; this being the All Whites' return to the big-time after a 28-year absence. An opening 1-all draw with the Kiwis seemed a predictably-fair outcome(indeed, the Kiwis would bow out un-beaten after 3 draws) if deflated by the following 2-0 loss to Paraguay. It was the final group match which threw up the biggest shock however, with the Slovaks triumphing 3-2 over the Azzurri and thus progressing to a 2nd-round date with destiny against the Dutch in another all-Euro affair. It was at that point that the Slovaks' WC quest ended, courtesy of a 2-1 win to the Netherlands en route to the WC Final which they would lose to Spain.

Thus the signs augured well for the Slovaks' Euro 2012 campaign, with only Russia and Ireland as chief obstacles - alas it was to be another gross underestimating of the other opposition; proved most evidently by Andorra's higher finish on the group ladder than Slovakia.

### BIG CLUBS

Slovan Bratislava is the country's undisputed super-club, a mainstay even in the Czechoslovak era during which they won the 1969 UEFA Cup-Winners' Cup and 10 InterToto Cups between 1968 and 1994, in addition to their 8

Cheskoslovak league titles between 1949 and 1992, and 5 Czechoslovak Cups between 1961 and 1982. Since independence they have won 6 Slovak Super League titles, 4 Slovak Super Cups and 5 Slovak Cups in addition to their 7 'regional' Cups won during the Czechoslovak era.

In the last decade MŠK Žilina have seriously threatened Slovan's domestic dominance, having now won 6 Slovak titles in that time and qualified for the group stages of the last-ever UEFA Cup(2008-09) and the 2010-11 Champions League. Another club of note is FC Petržalka 1898 - a crosstown rival of Slovan's - who as Artmedia Bratislava qualified for the group stage of the 2005-06 Champions League, becoming the second-ever Slovak club to do so.

### REP YOUR COLORS

Nicknamed Repre,(although other nicknames have included 'The Fighting Jondas' and 'The Valaškas'; meaning The Shepherds' Axes) the Slovak NT traditionally wears all-blue with white and red trims, with the away all-white with inverted trims. As for the clubs, Slovan Bratislava wears a sky-blue kit with white trims, with the away a rather impressive navy-blue with metallic-amber pinstriped kit; MŠK Žilina wear canary-yellow shirts and socks with green shorts(like Norwich City and the Lithuanian NT) with an all-green away, and finally FC Petržalka 1898 wear the time-honoured black & white stripes of Juventus, Newcastle Utd, Colingwood etc.

### MATCHWINNERS

Though there were always talented Slovak footballers during the Czechoslovak era, independence in 1993 finally gave them the platform they had craved most to showcase their gifts to the world. The first of these to emerge was striker Peter Dubovský, a youth-product of Slovan who soon found his way to Real Madrid in the mid-'90s, having already won several caps for Czechoslovakia. After independence he featured in 33 caps for 12

# South American Qualifiers Go Down to The Wire



**Latin Wrap**

Francis Fields

## TWO ROUNDS TO GO

It is down to the business end of what is a long road in the FIFA 2014 World Cup qualifiers in South America as the top four spots determine automatic qualification whilst fifth place secures a play-off against Jordan.

In news this past week Peru will play their World Cup qualifier against Bolivia on October 15 behind closed doors after the country's football association chose to withdrew an appeal against a FIFA sanction.

World soccer's ruling body confirmed the decision by the Peruvian FA on its website early Monday. The punishment was originally handed out last month by a FIFA disciplinary committee following crowd disturbances during the 2-1 qualifying defeat by Uruguay in Lima on September 6.

Peru, who are out of the running for a place at the 2014 finals in Brazil, were also fined 20,000 Swiss francs (\$22,100).

As for Argentina, midfield maestro Lionel Messi will sit out for Argentina's qualifiers against Peru and neighbours Uruguay. Messi is still recovering from a thigh problem. The Barcelona superstar was initially named in coach Alejandro Sabella's preliminary squad for the final two games of qualification. With the team's progression already confirmed, the 26-year-old attacker has been released from the squad to recover from his thigh injury.

Argentina will not hold back despite having already qualified for the World Cup finals or lost four top players including Lionel Messi to injury when they host Peru in a qualifier on Friday.

Coach Alejandro Sabella also will be without Gonzalo Higuain, Fernando Gago and Javier Mascherano, normal shoe-ins to his first choice team, for the match at the Monumental (2300 GMT) and their last qualifier away to Uruguay next Tuesday.

Argentina's goal is to win the South American group as a reaction to the difficulties they had to qualify under former coach Diego Maradona four years ago for the 2010 finals in South Africa, winger Angel Di Maria said on Tuesday.

"That time no-one gave us anything, we had to fight to the bitter end. In this series we're going to do the same and try to get the (remaining) six points to be champions of the qualifiers," said Di Maria, who with Messi, Higuain and Sergio Aguero is

## WC Qualifiers

### South America

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
1 Argentina	14	8	5	1	30	11	+19	29
2 Colombia	14	8	2	4	22	9	+13	26
3 Chile	14	8	0	6	24	21	+3	24
4 Ecuador	14	6	4	4	18	14	+4	22
5 Uruguay	14	6	4	4	22	22	0	22
6 Venezuela	15	5	4	6	13	19	-6	19
7 Peru	14	4	2	8	15	22	-7	14
8 Bolivia	15	2	5	8	16	29	-13	11
9 Paraguay	14	3	2	9	15	28	-13	11



Edinson Cavani will spearhead Uruguay's World Cup hopes this week.

part of Argentina's potent attacking quartet.

"Before the match with Paraguay we talked about wanting to depend only on ourselves, feel the responsibility of winning and being at the World Cup. We did it and it was a good feeling for all of us," he told reporters after practice at the Ezeiza training complex on the outskirts of the capital.

Four years ago Maradona's team went into the corresponding two qualifiers against Peru and Uruguay with qualification in the balance.

Still on Argentina, in the domestic club scene, Emmanuel Gigliotti scored his third goal in two matches to give giants Boca Juniors a 1-0 over River Plate in the 'Superclásico' - the match that divides the nation. The win lifts Boca to third place in the 'Inicial' championship.

The 23rd minute winner met an ice-cold and eerie reception as the River Plate Monumental stadium was silenced. This is due to new government regulations determining a ban on away fans to help minimize fan violence.

Boca have picked up from a rather dismal campaign start to go four matches without conceding a goal and unbeaten picking up ten points in the process leaving them on 19 points. This leaves only four points adrift from league leaders Newell's Old Boys in the mid-way point of the season.

Newell's won 2-0 at Quilmes with San Lorenzo second on 20 points after a 0-0 draw at home to Tigre.

River dropped to seventh with the 'Superclásico' loss leaving them nine points off the pace, after Racing Club's woeful season worsened with a 1-0 home loss at 'El Cilindro' to Atlético Rafaela, who are now fifth. Racing are bottom with two points and have a 3-18 goals record in

10 matches.

Boca, who weathered an early storm of River attacks, went ahead when Juan Román Riquelme still displaying his slick skills as he sent a pass out wide to the right, Juan Manuel Martínez crossed low and Gigliotti deflected the ball past goalkeeper Marcelo Barovero into the net.

"We didn't want Newell's to get away from us. We're going to fight for the title to the end," said playmaker Riquelme to reporters.

River coach Ramón Díaz said: "Today the best team didn't win ... A fairer result would have been a draw. "The Argentine championship always gives you a chance for revenge. Next Sunday we're going to visit Newell's in Rosario ... and if we can't bring Newell's down, then who will?"

Both sides hit the post, Martínez towards the end of the first half and River substitute Rodrigo Mora with a header in the dying minutes as the visitors defended their lead. River had more possession and created some good moves but were guilty of errors with the final ball against a generally tight defence.

### SUAREZ ADAMANT ON TOP FOUR BERTH

Luis Suárez says Uruguay will not be content with anything less than direct qualification for next year's World Cup in Brazil.

The 26-year-old arrived in Montevideo earlier in the week to join his Celeste teammates ahead of their final South America zone



The tie between Colombia vs Chile has brought interesting tussles over the years

qualifiers against Ecuador in Quito for Saturday's clash and Argentina in Montevideo four days later.

After a poor start to the qualifying campaign, Uruguay have won their past three matches to be fifth in the standings, three points ahead of sixth-placed Venezuela. The top four teams from the CONMEBOL region progress automatically to the World Cup while fifth will fight for a spot against the fifth best team from Asia.

"Three rounds ago people said we needed a miracle to even

get a play-off place," the Liverpool forward said. "Now we only need one point to guarantee that, but we want an automatic qualification."

Suarez reiterated South America's qualification group is at times grueling with a two-year process that had taken its toll on the players. "It's just as well that the qualifiers are ending. It's been a long, tiring process," he said.

SBS will broadcast the qualifiers between Argentina vs Peru live at 10am Saturday morning live. Be sure not to miss it.



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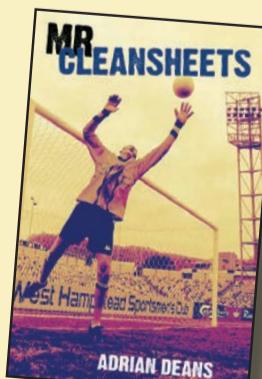


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ADRIAN DEANS



Samuel Collins

The jumbo screen above the Northam stand read: 89:54. Those who had attempted to depart St. Mary's in the preceding moments scrambled back in. Daniel Fox stood over a free-kick, just short of the half-way line, intent on whipping the ball into the 'mixer'; this was the last opportunity, a chance to net an equaliser.

The Scottish left-back delivered the most delicious of crosses and Saints' fans had their wish, José Fonte nodded past Mark Schwarzer. Southampton had nicked a point, with four seconds remaining. "It's obviously pleasing," Nigel Adkins, somewhat patently, admitted afterwards. His side had just steered clear of the relegation places. It was only the second time Southampton had avoided defeat in their opening seven fixtures. The 2-2 draw took them up to 17th.

Fast forward a year, and things have changed on the south coast. Draws leaving Southampton just above the bottom three have developed into wins taking the club into the top four. Mauricio Pochettino is the Saints' new manager; the

## Solid Saints shine under Pochettino



The Saints are alive and flourishing under manager Mauricio Pochettino.

41-year old Argentine, a highly-regarded, ambitious and modern coach, left Espanyol for England in January. "He's an impressive guy," says £12.5m summer signing Victor Wanyama, "he gets his message across easily and understands each player's role." This, despite Pochettino's inability to yet master the language on these shores. Translators during press conferences remain a regular sight.

On Sunday, Swansea City came to town. And, as ever, the Welsh side, brilliantly schooled by Michael Laudrup, had their ball - only three Premier League sides average more possession than Swansea (56.5%) per game - but not for the first time this season, it mattered for little. Southampton, lining up in Pochettino's usual 4-2-3-1, saw only 42% of the ball, yet once Mike Dean had blown his whistle for the final time, the

home side had the three points. Adam Lallana netted the first - a tremendous strike following a miscued clearance from centre-half Chico - after just 18 minutes, before substitute Jay Rodriguez wrapped up the victory when Chico's defensive partner Jordi Amat - standing in for captain Ashley Williams - comically failed to deal with a long ball.

Laudrup insisted his men deserved more, but, despite 17

shots, 4 corners, 542 passes, 29 crosses and almost 60% of the ball, they couldn't find a way past Southampton's outstanding number one: Arthur Boruc. "He was incredible," Pochettino said of the Polish international. The former Celtic keeper hasn't conceded a goal in 382 minutes; 4 successive clean sheets. In fact, on Sunday, Southampton became only the 20th side in the history of the English game to concede fewer than 3 goals in their first 7 league games. This time last season, Adkins' side had let in 20.

So why is Pochettino's defence, statistically ten times stronger than Adkins' back four? The addition of Croatian centre-half Dejan Lovren has no doubt helped. The talented 24-year old joined from Lyon for £8.5m and has formed an impressive partnership with Fonte. He even netted the winner in the club's outstanding 1-0 victory at Anfield in September. In front of the duo sit rocks Morgan Schneiderlin and Wanyama, workaholics who never stop hassling their opponents. No Premier League team have conceded fewer efforts (14) on goal than Southampton; their defensive record isn't a fluke. It's a result of Pochettino's tactics, training regimes and intense pressing game. And whilst that defensive quartet might all be foreign, the club have a well-renowned academy - Gareth Bale and Theo Walcott are famous graduates - the latest products

being full-backs Luke Shaw and Calum Chambers, as well as mid-fielder James Ward-Prowse, all of whom are aged 18, and look the part.

So, how far can Southampton go? Since March, only last season's top seven have won more points than Pochettino's men. Could they finish in a Europa League place? Well, that's not enough; "I'm not keen on that," says 'the sheriff', a nickname Pochettino earned for his tough training methods in Spain, "I think we're all attracted to the Champions League." Whilst that objective seems a touch extravagant, at least for now, anything seems possible in the future. In 2011, the club were still in League one. Southampton's ability to pull off the £15m signing of Roma's Italian forward Pablo Osvaldo this summer represents the club's pulling power and growing reputation across the continent. A trip to Old Trafford to face stuttering champions Manchester United awaits after the international break. Though, so strong has been their start, even a defeat would keep the Saints a point above David Moyes' side.

"There's a structure at this club to help everyone improve, and that goes from the Chairman to the cleaning lady." You sense Pochettino is at the right place at the right time.

Seventeenth place certainly feels longer than twelve months ago for Southampton.

\*where Liverpool and Spurs have played Crystal Palace and Cardiff respectively, I have substituted last year's results against comparable teams. Therefore Crystal Palace = West Ham (both came up through the play-offs and Cardiff = Reading (both were champions of Championship).

### Waiting to Lose

Anyone watching the Sunderland-Man Utd match on Saturday would have been struck at how jaded Sunderland looked in the first 20 minutes of the second half. The reason is simple. They played a high tempo game for 35 minutes, pressuring United and getting a reward of a goal in the first half. But come the second they looked puffed out and when United scored they seemed to lose heart and were waiting for that killer second goal, in other words waiting to lose. The tactics didn't help much. Their central defenders pumped the ball towards Jose Altidore and all too often he was second best to Vidic. When the full-backs pumped the ball into channels it was swallowed up by the back four as well. But it was their habit of giving away possession under the slightest pressure that nearly had my remote control flying towards the TV screen. As much as some may not like the style of football of Barcelona, Arsenal and Bayern Munich, it is effective. Keeping the ball tires out the opposition and allows teams more space later in the game. Once upon a time, when teams played a kick and rush style that was guaranteed to lose possession as often as a basketball game, Sunderland's 'style' was unacceptable. These days teams cherish possession, especially in their own half; the ball becomes a crown and possession makes you king (most of the time).

Sunderland distinguished themselves by giving it away all over the field. The bottom line is they were poor before Di Canio, during Di Canio and they're poor now. Perhaps they really need the abilities of Harry Potter rather than their chosen coach, Gus Poyet. Then again, it's never too late to appoint Potter as an assistant! Sources: [premierleague.com](http://premierleague.com) [arsenal.com/liverpoolfc.com](http://arsenal.com/liverpoolfc.com) [tottenhamhotspur.com](http://tottenhamhotspur.com) Facebook: Twitter: [@leroyrobinson](http://@leroyrobinson)

## Arsenal, Liverpool and Spurs: The Great Pretenders or the Great Contenders?



Leroy Robinson

No, it's not an optical illusion. A prolonged look at the Premier League table sees a couple of unfamiliar names at the top. With Chelsea and the two Manchester clubs changing their coaching staff over the summer, some have suggested that this could be the season the likes of Arsenal and Liverpool - currently first and second respectively - challenge for the league title. Add a Spurs side that have also kept their existing coaching set-up, as well as spending a fortune, and there could be a shake-up at the very top of the league.

But are Arsenal, Liverpool and Spurs ready to challenge for the league title? Should they have more modest goals in mind? A look at their respective starts shows that, compared with this time last year, Arsenal are four points better off, Liverpool are ten better off and Spurs are one point worse off. So two out of the three are doing better than they did last year...or are they?

### Arsenal

Most people would agree that, despite the massive number of departures, Arsenal have a better team than last year. But how are they better? There are two ways a team can improve. The first is to acquire talent and the second is for the existing talent to improve. Arsenal Football Club is in the excellent position of getting better in both ways. Mesut Özil has undoubtedly improved Arsenal as a whole. He is the true definition of a world-class player: one that makes the players around him better. Even before he arrived, Aaron Ramsey has been a revelation and Kieran Gibbs and Carl Jenkinson are very capable full-backs who have developed immensely. And Arsenal's start to the season

### LEAGUE POSITIONS AT 6 OCTOBER 2013

POSITION	P	W	L	D	F	A	PTS
1 - ARSENAL	7	5	1	1	14	8	16
2 - LIVERPOOL	7	5	1	1	11	5	16
6 - TOTTENHAM	7	4	2	1	6	5	13

### RESULTS AGAINST COMPARABLE OPPONENT IN 2012-2013

	P	W	L	D	F	A	PTS	PTS DIFF+/-
ARSENAL	7	7	0	0	14	4	21	-5
LIVERPOOL	7	2	1	4	5	4	10	+6
TOTTENHAM	7	4	2	1	15	14	13	-

### LEAGUE POSITIONS AFTER 7 GAMES IN 2012-13

POSITION	P	W	L	D	F	A	PTS
5 - TOTTENHAM	7	4	1	2	13	8	14
7 - ARSENAL	7	3	1	3	13	5	12
14 - LIVERPOOL	7	1	3	3	9	12	6

has been nothing short of superb. However, is it really that impressive? Isn't it true that all they've really done is beat the teams they should beat?

A true indication of their start to the season is what I call The Robinson Index. The Index dictates that we get a more accurate indication of how well a team has fared by comparing their results from the corresponding fixtures last season.

For example, on opening day this year Arsenal played Aston Villa at home and lost 3-1, yet in the corresponding fixture last year they won 2-1. In fact, a closer look at the teams Arsenal has played this year might make you view their start rather differently. That is because whilst 16 points from seven games is very good, last year Arsenal won all seven corresponding fixtures against the teams they played this season. Had they translated that into the 2013-14 season the Gunners would actually have 21 points - five clear of Liverpool, a whopping eight clear of Spurs and 11 ahead of United. Therefore, (aside from the Villa and West Brom games) in reality Arsenal have performed slightly worse this season when compared to last season.

And this is what makes it hard to judge whether Arsenal are genuine title challengers or just heavyweight bullies playing against welters. There is also that

nagging feeling that Arsenal's mediocrity over the last eight years has eroded any confidence about them becoming title winners.

There is another reason to be circumspect too. Last year Chelsea were sitting pretty at the top with 19 points and they finished third. So let's be careful before putting red and white ribbons on the Premier League trophy. Put another way, if Arsenal were a scientific experiment, we'd conclude that the sample size of fixtures is currently too small to judge whether they will win the league.

What is certain is that we'll know a whole lot more about how good they are when they play some of the fixtures that gave them problems last year, such as Liverpool (h) and Manchester United (a) in November. You could even argue that we will only know if they're the real deal come December, which sees colossal games against Everton (h), Napoli (a), Manchester City (a) and Chelsea (h). That should tell us if they're just flat track bullies or have really improved from last year.

### Liverpool

As for Liverpool, the turnaround in their fortunes was entirely predictable. They have ten more points at this stage than they had last year, and, just as importantly, they have six more points against comparable opponents\* than they had last year. This has largely been

achieved by turning last season's defeat at home to Manchester United, and draws against Stoke and Sunderland, into wins.

The one glaring improvement in Liverpool thus far is that they have scored twice as many goals this year against comparable opponents, whilst still keeping a tight defence. Now does this mean they are potential title winners? Not quite. It proves that stats can only get you so far, and then you have to rely on wisdom and common sense. Teams don't normally come from outside the top six to win the league. Plus, their midfield does not have the creativity and balance that's needed. Gerrard is no longer an offensive force and playing him and Lucas together (as well as Henderson) will not unlock stingy defences in tight games. The return of Coutinho cannot come quick enough. However, his absence highlights the dearth of creative talent in the squad.

However, if they continue this trend of winning the games they drew last year, which I believe they will, a top six place is assured. As for challenging for the league, only monumental implosions by the top teams will see them get anywhere near a title tilt.

### Tottenham

Spurs, unfortunately, are the Great Pretenders. Against comparable opponents\* they have fared ex-

## Barclays Premier League

Andrew Bishara

### New Wave Talent Excites EPL

The Premier League season is still in the early stages (only seven rounds in) but fans can't help but feel that this could be the open in years.

Firstly, look at the top two: both on 16 points, Arsenal and Liverpool lead the way, with both having contrasting stories on their way to the top.

Liverpool have rode a wave of confidence; looking like they have adapted to Brendan Rodgers' style of play. The return of Luis Suarez to the fold might have caused problems, but Rodgers has managed to perfectly balance his side, playing both Suarez and Daniel Sturridge, while maintaining a solid defence. Arsenal on the other hand, have risen from their shambolic opening day loss to Aston Villa with ten straight wins. That day, Gunners fans were bathing for blood – Arsene Wenger's, the board's, and the owner's – especially after the club failed to make that "big signing" they promised all summer.

But how things have changed thanks to the arrival Mesut Ozil. The German playmaker has sparked the Gunners to life, lifting his teammates and the mood around the Emirates. Suddenly Arsenal fans are happy all over again; there is talk to title run and Wenger might be offered an contract extension.

Sitting third on 14 points is Jose Mourinho's Chelsea. The Special One's return has brought mixed bag of results. They've played sparkling football at times, but haven't followed it up on a consistent basis. Seems Mourinho is split between trying to play his counter-



Mesut Ozil has made an immediate impact at Arsenal.

attacking game, while trying to please owner Roman Abramovich's love of guns-blazing football at the same time.

In fourth we have the surprise packet of Southampton. Mauricio Pochettino has done a marvellous job with the Saints. They hold the best defence of the league, conceding only four goals and keeping five clean sheets. It's early days yet, but if the Saints can maintain their solid defence and expand the attacking range, a Europa League place isn't out of the question.

**But how things have changed thanks to the arrival Mesut Ozil. The German playmaker has sparked the Gunners to life, lifting his teammates and the mood around the Emirates. Suddenly Arsenal fans are happy all over again;**

Then from fifth to seventh we have a Manchester City, Tottenham and Everton – all three having decent campaigns, but all facing different

issues.

City lead the table with goals scored (17), yet their defense lapses at crucial times (against Aston Villa and Cardiff City) have cost the team valuable points. New coach, Manuel Pellegrini will have to fix that issue if there are to make a serious title challenge.

Tottenham have seven new players in the team, spending the Gareth Bale money wisely. The issue for Andre Villas-Boas is how long will it take the new boys to settle in, but more worryingly is the lack of firepower up front.

While Everton have had a stellar start to the season, with new manager Roberto Martinez bringing his possession game to Merseyside. The side look great in attack, but defensively (as usual with Martinez's game) they let far too many goals in. But Everton fans are glad with the change of style after a decade of David Moyes' brand of football.

Speaking of Moyes, he has the toughest gig in the land, replacing Sir Alex Ferguson at Manchester United. United lack their usual spark and for all the talk of signing a new midfielder, bringing in a more reliable centre-back would have helped more. Regardless this is natural: whoever replaced Sir Alex wasn't going to have the best start.

## ENGLAND EPL

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first
1 Arsenal	7	5	1	1	14	8	+6	16	DWWWW
2 Liverpool	7	5	1	1	11	5	+6	16	WWLDW
3 Chelsea	7	4	2	1	10	4	+6	14	WWWDL
4 Southampton	7	4	2	1	7	2	+5	14	WWWDL
5 Manchester City	7	4	1	2	17	8	+9	13	WLWDW
6 Tottenham Hotspur	7	4	1	2	6	5	+1	13	LWWWL
7 Everton	7	3	3	1	10	9	+1	12	LWWWD
8 Hull City	7	3	2	2	6	7	-1	11	DWWDL
9 Manchester United	7	3	1	3	10	9	+1	10	WLLWL
10 Aston Villa	7	3	1	3	9	8	+1	10	DWWLL
11 Newcastle United	7	3	1	3	9	12	-3	10	WLLWW
12 West Bromwich	7	2	3	2	7	6	+1	9	DWWDL
13 West Ham United	7	2	2	3	7	5	+2	8	WLWDL
14 Cardiff City	7	2	2	3	7	9	-2	8	WLWDD
15 Swansea City	7	2	1	4	8	11	-3	7	LLWWD
16 Stoke City	7	2	1	4	4	7	-3	7	LLLDW
17 Fulham	7	2	1	4	5	9	-4	7	WLWDL
18 Norwich City	7	2	1	4	5	9	-4	7	LWLLW
19 Crystal Palace	7	1	0	6	5	13	-8	3	LLLLW
20 Sunderland	7	0	1	6	5	16	-11	1	LLLL

## Latest Results

Manchester City 3 - 1 Everton	Newcastle U v Liverpool
Cardiff City 1 - 2 Newcastle U	Arsenal v Norwich City
Fulham 1 - 0 Stoke City	Chelsea v Cardiff City
Hull City 0 - 0 Aston Villa	Everton v Hull City
Liverpool 3 - 1 Crystal Palace	Man Utd v Southampton
Sunderland 1 - 2 Man Utd	Stoke City v WBA
Norwich City 1 - 3 Chelsea	Swansea City v Sunderland
Southampton 2 - 0 Swansea	West Ham v Manchester City
Tottenham 0 - 3 West Ham	Aston Villa v Tottenham
WBA 1 - 1 Arsenal	Crystal Palace v Fulham

## One To Watch This Weekend...

If you get a good view of the game, England taking on Montenegro will be a cracker.

England has to go for the win.

Draw, and a Ukraine win, and they'll be in the play-off position. That play-off round won't be easy, with a host of major nations, such as Spain, France and Portugal, vying for that position.

More so, the dangerous underdogs such as Croatia, Belgium, Russia, Sweden, Greece, Bosnia and Turkey are just a few of the nations that England could face. With a place in the World Cup up for grabs, no nation will give it up that easily.

So England will have to go out guns blazing. Expect the big names to start: Wayne Rooney, Frank Lampard, Steven Gerrard and Jack Wilshere are the biggest names on the team sheet.

Will England make it through? They have some of best firepower available, but it's a matter of releasing the shackles, and for the first time in a while, they'll have too.

Follow Andrew on Twitter  
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## London Eye

Eddie Gray

With just ten points from their opening seven league games it's been far from an ideal start to life at Manchester United for David Moyes.

Defeats to fierce rivals Liverpool and Manchester City along with a home loss to West Brom have resulted in the Red Devils making their worst start to a season in 24 years.

The gap left by Sir Alex Ferguson looks to be as big, if not even bigger than many first thought.

Moyes tenure at Old Trafford has failed to begin anywhere near as well as he would have hoped and the signs were there it could be a difficult settling in period even before a ball was kicked in anger.

After failing to land any of his transfer targets early on in the window a sense of panic seemed to ensue towards the end of July and the effects are now visible for all to see.

Despite pursuing Cesc Fabregas adamantly, admiring Cristiano Ronaldo and Gareth Bale from afar, looking closely at Ander Herrera and making public bids for Leighton Baines and Marouane Fellaini it was only the latter who came through the doors at Carrington on deadline day.

This failure to get business done put Moyes on the back foot immediately and at the same time sent a

## Moyes midfield short of spark



Time will tell if David Moyes can get the combination right at Old Trafford.

clear message to the current squad that he felt there wasn't enough world class talent amongst them.

It wins over Wigan in the Community Shield and an emphatic 4-1 away triumph over Swansea hinted United had masked over their shortcomings in the transfer market but after drawing to Chelsea and poor results against Liverpool, Man City and West Brom it is clear Moyes hasn't got the side he wants at his disposal.

One of the main issues the manager has with the United side is the

severe shortage in attacking movement and fluidity from midfield.

Having elected to get rid of former first team coach Rene Meulensteen and bring in his own backroom staff, Moyes has found out the hard way how influential the Dutchman was in developing and enhancing the Old Trafford attack.

Since his departure there has been a lack of creativity and tempo to the forward play at Old Trafford with significantly fewer chances being created from wide areas as well as through the middle, resulting in

Robin Van Persie, Wayne Rooney and co being left frustrated up top. The failure to open up defences as easily as they did last year has led to a lack of confidence in the midfielders available to Moyes and has left him short of flair and imagination in the areas that are so crucial to providing his star strike force with the service they thrive on. Shinji Kagawa has looked half the player he was at Dortmund, Nani has been extremely inconsistent, Antonio Valencia has not hit the heights he has reached in previous

campaigns and Ashley Young may have played his last game for the club after such a terrible start to the season. The only shining light in the wide areas has been youngster Adnan Januzaj. Many fans of the Manchester club would have expected fellow prospect Wilfried Zaha to shine but it has been the 18-year-old who has stood out with his balance and positive impetus arguably making him United's best midfielder this term, something you would not have expected at the start of the year.

There are also evident problems at the heart of the midfield.

Despite the £27 million signing of Fellaini to partner Michael Carrick, who was one of the best central midfielders in the Premier League last season with his passing range and composure on the ball particular highlights, there still appears to be a gap to fill.

The towering Belgian international has so far looked short of the mobility required to get forward and support attacks and his passing speed has lacked the tempo to spring counter attacks, a big problem for a side who have previously relied so heavily on such distribution to get forward.

But it is still early days for the former Everton man and once he has become accustomed to his new surroundings and adapts to a new style of play he may prove to be a good signing for Moyes, with his impressive frame certainly providing a physicality that hasn't been seen

at Old Trafford since Roy Keane. It is just a question whether his technical attributes can match up to his physical ones but for a player who cost close to £30 million there won't be much patience afforded as he looks to step up to the mark.

Behind Carrick and Fellaini in the pecking order currently sit Tom Cleverley and Anderson, highlighting the shortage the club has in central areas. Both have been given chances but have not done enough with their opportunities to cement a place in the starting eleven. Despite both looking strong on the ball in their own half and having the mobility to hunt the ball high up the pitch they often lack the confidence in the final third to make a defence splitting pass. The pair are both older and carry greater experience than Aaron Ramsey at Arsenal but it is the Gunner who has set the Premier League alight this year despite having previous inconsistencies leaving the United duo miles off the standard the Welshman has set.

With a midfield bereft of confidence, lacking flair and decisiveness in creative areas it could be a long wait until January for David Moyes. In the mean time the former Everton boss will have to hope he can galvanise his middle men into some sort of form to support Rooney and Van Persie and arrest their already faltering title challenge before it is too late.

## Serie A

James Szabo

## Juventus Bounce Back

Juventus answered the critics in the best possible way after a 3-2 victory in a thriller with AC Milan, while AS Roma slotted 3 goals past Inter to secure top spot. Napoli remained in second place with a dominant 4-0 win over a lacklustre Livorno. Meanwhile Hellas Verona's good form continued at a rainy Stadio Renato Dall'Ara, as they recorded their fourth victory of the campaign so far.

Juventus was under harsh scrutiny during the week following the Bianconeri drawing their first two Champions League games. With the media heavily on the backs of last season's Serie A champions, coach - Antonio Conte knew something had to be done to prove a point against a struggling AC Milan.

Allegri went on record this week by dubbing the criticism from the media as being "unfair" and told reporters he believes his boys would be up to the task of overcoming Juventus.

AS Roma sit perched on the top of the table, 3 points clear after a dominant performance over Inter. In a game that looked to be a tight contest from both unbeaten sides, proved to be anything



Carlos Tevez in action for Juve against Milan.

but, as veteran Francesco Totti scored a trademark double in the 18th and 40th minutes. The Nerazzurri started the game confidently with the first chance of the game from Saphire Taidier, but De Sanctis' impressive record of clean sheets looked to stay intact as he dealt with the long shot from the edge of the box comfortably. The chances for Inter were few and far between after the first few minutes and Totti's goal from a similar distance along with his penalty kick, that tested the strength of the net, provided the main highlights of the first half. In the 44th minute Alessandro Florenzi took the responsibility of breaking the hearts of Inter supporters with a counter attack goal that was struck low and hard across Handanovic into the bottom corner, killing off any chance of a comeback. Inter suffered their

first loss of the season as the Giullorossi protected their 3-0 lead to the final whistle.

It was a day to forget for Livorno goalkeeper Francesco Bardi with a goalkeeping howler in the 26th minute, making the 4-0 defeat even worse. Napoli had a relatively easy day at the office and made light work of the Livorno defence with 2 goals in each half from Goran Pandev, Gokhan Inler, Jose Callejon and Marek Hamsik. Pandev's expertly placed goal was the pick of the bunch, handing him the Man of the Match.

A rainy Bologna day wasn't enough to dampen the spirits of the Verona attackers as they continued their impressive start to the season with a 4-1 victory over a disappointing Bologna who only managed a goal through Diamanti from the penalty spot. Udinese's knack of scoring from

set pieces was again evident in their 2-0 win over 14th placed Cagliari. A free kick from Antonio Di Natale was expertly crossed in from outside the box and found the head of Danilo in the 33rd to put the boys from Udine 1-0 up. Di Natale was up to his tricks again 20 minutes later, with a magnificent free kick which beat Cagliari goalkeeper Michael Agazzi and added a 5th goal to the 'Mr Udinese' goal tally for season 2013/14.

Lazio and Fiorentina played out a 0-0 draw and added extra pressure on both clubs who have not

lived up to expectations so far. Other drawn games included a 1-1 finish between Catania and Genoa, where the own goal from Legrottaglie cost the Sicilians 3 points and Torino and Sampdoria unable to be separated at 2 goals apiece.

Atalanta downed hosts Chievo

Verona with a first half goal and

## ITALY Serie A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games
1 Roma	7	7	0	0	20	1	+19	21	WWWWWW
2 Napoli	7	6	1	0	18	4	+14	19	WWWWWW
3 Juventus	7	6	1	0	14	6	+8	19	WWWWWD
4 Internazionale	7	4	2	1	16	6	+10	14	LDWWWD
5 Hellas Verona	7	4	1	2	13	10	+3	13	WWDLW
6 Fiorentina	7	3	3	1	13	8	+5	12	DDLWD
7 Lazio	7	3	2	2	11	10	+1	11	DDWLW
8 Udinese	7	3	1	3	9	8	+1	10	WLWLD
9 Torino	7	2	3	2	10	10	+0	9	DLDWD
10 Parma	7	2	3	2	11	12	-1	9	WDWDL
11 Atalanta	7	3	0	4	9	10	-1	9	WWLLL
12 Milan	7	2	2	3	13	13	+0	8	LWLDL
13 Livorno	7	2	2	3	8	10	-2	8	LLDDW
14 Cagliari	7	1	4	2	8	11	-3	7	LDLDD
15 Genoa	7	1	2	4	6	11	-5	5	DLLDW
16 Catania	7	1	2	4	5	11	-6	5	DWLDL
17 Chievo	7	1	1	5	5	13	-8	4	LLLWL
18 Sampdoria	7	0	3	4	6	13	-7	3	DLDDL
19 Bologna	7	0	3	4	8	20	-12	3	LLDDL
20 Sassuolo	7	0	2	5	5	21	-16	2	LDLDD

## Latest Results

Chievo 0 - 1 Atalanta	Cagliari v Catania
Internazionale 0 - 3 Roma	Roma v Napoli
Parma 3 - 1 Sassuolo	Milan v Udinese
Bologna 1 - 4 Verona	Atalanta v Lazio
Catania 1 - 1 Genoa	Florentina v Juventus
Napoli 4 - 0 Livorno	Genoa v Chievo
Sampdoria 2 - 2 Torino	Hellas Verona v Parma
Udinese 2 - 0 Cagliari	Livorno v Sampdoria
Juventus 3 - 2 Milan	Sassuolo v Bologna
Lazio 0 - 0 Fiorentina	Torino v Internazionale

## Next Match

Cagliari v Catania	GOAL! WEEKLY FRIDAY 11TH OCTOBER 2013
Internazionale 0 - 3 Roma	Roma v Napoli
Parma 3 - 1 Sassuolo	Milan v Udinese
Bologna 1 - 4 Verona	Atalanta v Lazio
Catania 1 - 1 Genoa	Florentina v Juventus
Napoli 4 - 0 Livorno	Genoa v Chievo
Sampdoria 2 - 2 Torino	Hellas Verona v Parma
Udinese 2 - 0 Cagliari	Livorno v Sampdoria
Juventus 3 - 2 Milan	Sassuolo v Bologna
Lazio 0 - 0 Fiorentina	Torino v Internazionale

## One To Watch This Weekend...

Will Wigan continue their fantastic escape from the drop? They take on QPR at Lotus Road, who sadly, look dead and buried for a stint in the Championship.

ventus. Lazio will visit Atalanta in a must win game for the Biancoceleste while Inter will be keen to bounce back in what looks to be a winnable game against Torino. While Roma and Napoli fight for top spot, Sassuolo and Bologna will be fighting to stay off the bottom. Verona gets a chance to continue their good form in front of a home crowd as Parma goes up against Hellas for the first time since a Coppa Italia match in 2011. Cagliari will be looking to take the next step against Catania after drawing four of their last five Serie A games. Escaping relegation will be a main goal for Sampdoria this season, so this week's game against Livorno will provide an excellent opportunity for the team to jump out of the deadly bottom three at the foot of the table. Finally Genoa will look to start their push to the middle of the table as they take on Chievo Verona at Stadio Comunale

## Viva Espana

Pepe Lopez

## Partido de Fútbol Espanol!

After a 2-year exile of Spanish La Liga Football from Australian television screens, Foxtel has answered the call of many depressed football fans Down Under, by filling the gap left over by ESPN Australia's decision to cut La Liga from their schedules.

Many fans campaigned by creating online petitions and Facebook groups denouncing ESPN Australia's decision 2 years to dump coverage of the football league with the world's highest paid footballers. Yours truly, Pepe Lopez, stepped up to the plate here on Goal Weekly during this time to also create awareness of LLDS problem in Australia. La Liga Deficiency Syndrome.

After trials of ad-hoc scheduled telecasts of 2 El Clasico's during the 2012-2013 season, Foxtel were impressed enough with the level of interest in La Liga to pursue a new 2-year contact of La Liga coverage. No doubt, the level of interest in the Spanish



Real came unstuck against Atletico in the Madrid derby.

League exponentially exploded when Barcelona captured the signing of what is anticipated to be the world's next best player, Brazilian Neymar, whilst Real Madrid caused a sensation with the another world record transfer fee for Tottenham Hotspur Welsh winger, Gareth Bale.

Foxtel announced the news via the internet on the 26th of September, and quoted the A-League and Melbourne Heart Coach John Aloisi, Australia's first ever La Liga player in regards to the announcement;

"It is fantastic for Australian football fans to be able to enjoy two of the top club competitions in world football. Fans can not only look forward to watching big matches

such as the Manchester Derby, but now they can catch the Milan and Madrid derbies, and see world-class players like Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo live every week. Having played in Spain, I always keep a close eye on the competition."

First up for Foxtel was a most historic Madrid derby match. For it was the first time in 14 years that Atletico Madrid had defeated Real Madrid in the La Liga in 14 years. In 1999, Atletico Madrid defeated Real Madrid at the Santiago Bernabeu, since then it has taken former Atleti player Diego Simeone to return to the club as coach and restore Atletico Madrid's self-esteem.

Whilst new Real Madrid manager

## SPAIN La Liga

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games
1 Barcelona	8	8	0	0	28	6	+22	24	WWWWWW
2 Atletico Madrid	8	8	0	0	21	6	+15	24	WWWWWW
3 Real Madrid	8	6	1	1	17	9	+8	19	WLWWD
4 Villarreal	8	5	2	1	15	7	+8	17	WLWDD
5 Getafe	8	4	1	3	13	13	+0	13	WWLWL
6 Athletic Club	8	4	1	3	13	13	+0	13	DLWLW
7 Valencia	8	4	1	3	11	11	+0	13	DWWWL
8 Espanyol	8	3	2	3	11	11	+0	11	LLLWW
9 Levante	8	2	4	2	8	14	-6	10	LWDDD
10 Málaga	8	2	3	3	11	7	+4	9	LDWWD
11 Sevilla	8	2	3	3	13	14	-1	9	WDWL
12 Elche	8	2	3	3	8	11	-3	9	WWLLD
13 Real Betis	8	2	2	4	8	10	-2	8	LWLDW
14 Granada	8	2	2	4	5	8	-3	8	WLWDL
15 Real Sociedad	8	1	4	3	6	9	-3	7	LDLDD
16 Celta de Vigo	8	1	3	4	8	12	-4	6	LLDDL
17 Real Valladolid	8	1	3	4	7	13	-6	6	LDLDD
18 Osasuna	8	2	0	6	6	13	-7	6	WLLWL
19 Rayo Vallecano	8	2	0	6	6	21	-15	6	WLLLL
20 Almeria	8	0	3	5	11	19	-8	3	LLLDL

## Latest Results

Villarreal 3 - 0 Granada	Real Madrid v Málaga
Málaga 0 - 1 Osasuna	Valencia v Real Sociedad
Elche 2 - 1 Espanyol	Osasuna v Barcelona
Vallecano 1 - 0 R Sociedad	Espanyol v Atletico Madrid
Levante 2 - 3 Real Madrid	Granada v Getafe
Barcelona 4 - 1 Real Valladolid	Almeria v Vallecano
Atlet Madrid 2 - 1 Celta Vigo	Real Betis v Elche
Sevilla 2 - 1 Almeria	Real Valladolid v Sevilla
Getafe 3 - 1 Real Betis	Celta de Vigo v Levante
Athletic Club 1 - 1 Valencia	Athletic Club v Villarreal

## Next Match

Villarreal 3 - 0 Granada	Real Madrid
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CROATIA		1.HNL							
P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first	
1 Dinamo Zagreb	12	8	3	1	18	7	+11	27	WDWLW
2 Hajduk Split	12	7	3	2	19	7	+12	24	DDWWL
3 Rijeka	12	6	5	1	20	9	+11	23	LDWWD
4 Lokomotiva	12	7	2	3	22	13	+9	23	LWWWD
5 Istra 1961	12	5	2	5	15	17	-2	17	WWLLL
6 Split	12	4	4	4	13	13	+0	16	DLWDW
7 Zadar	12	3	3	6	10	18	-8	12	DDLWL
8 Slaven Koprivnica	12	2	3	7	13	18	-5	9	WDLLW
9 Hrvatski Drago...	12	1	4	7	8	16	-8	7	LDLWL
10 Osijek	12	2	1	9	8	28	-20	7	DLWW

SCOTLAND		SPL							
P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first	
1 Celtic	8	7	1	0	19	7	+12	22	WWWW
2 Inverness CT	9	6	1	2	15	8	+7	19	LWLWW
3 Motherwell	9	5	1	3	11	11	+0	16	LWDWW
4 Aberdeen	9	4	2	3	11	8	+3	14	LDWWD
5 Hibernian	9	4	2	3	8	8	+0	14	WLWWD
6 Dundee United	9	3	4	2	12	7	+5	13	WDDWL
7 St. Johnstone	9	3	3	3	12	9	+3	12	WDLLD
8 Partick Thistle	9	2	4	3	8	10	-2	10	LDLLW
9 Ross County	9	3	1	5	11	17	-6	10	WLWLD
10 St. Mirren	8	1	2	5	5	13	-8	5	WDLL
11 Kilmarnock	9	0	3	6	8	16	-8	3	LLDLL
12 Heart of Midlo...	9	2	2	5	6	12	-6	7	LDLL

SERBIA		Super Liga							
P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first	
1 Partizan	8	5	2	1	17	8	+9	17	DLWW
2 Cukarički	8	5	2	1	9	3	+6	17	WLDWD
3 Vojvodina	8	4	4	0	9	5	+4	16	WDWW
4 Radnički Niš	8	3	4	1	10	5	+5	13	DDDLW
5 Crvena Zvezda	8	4	1	3	14	10	+4	13	LWLDW
6 Jagodina	8	3	2	8	6	6	+2	12	DWDWD
7 Napredak	8	3	2	3	12	10	+2	11	DLWLD
8 Novi Pazar	8	3	2	3	10	8	+2	11	DLWLW
9 Voždovac	8	2	4	2	7	8	-1	10	DLWDD
10 OFK Beograd	8	3	1	4	7	10	-3	10	DWLWL
11 Spartak Subotica	8	3	1	4	7	14	-7	9	WLWLL
12 Javor Ivanjica	8	2	3	3	8	10	-2	9	DDLLW
13 Sloboda Užice	8	1	4	3	6	9	-3	7	DWDLL
14 Radnički Kragu...	8	2	1	5	7	14	-7	7	DLWL
15 Donji Srem	8	1	3	4	8	12	-4	6	LWLDL
16 Rad Beograd	8	1	1	6	3	10	-7	4	LLDWL

GERMANY		Bundesliga							
P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first	
1 Bayern München	8	6	2	0	15	3	+12	20	DWWWD
2 Borussia Dortmund	8	6	1	1	21	7	+14	19	LWDWW
3 Bayer Leverkusen	8	6	1	1	18	8	+10	19	DWWWL
4 Borussia M'gl...	8	4	1	3	19	13	+6	13	WDLWL
5 Hannover 96	8	4	1	3	11	11	+0	13	DLWLW
6 Hertha BSC	8	3	3	2	14	9	+5	12	DWDLL
7 Stuttgart	8	3	2	3	16	10	+6	11	DWDWW
8 Schalke 04	8	3	2	3	14	17	-3	11	WDLWW
9 Werder Bremen	8	3	2	3	9	12	-3	11	DDWL
10 Hoffenheim	8	2	4	2	20	20	+0	10	DDLWL
11 Mainz 05	8	3	1	4	12	17	-5	10	DLLLL
12 Augsburg	8	3	1	4	9	15	-6	10	LDLWL
13 Eintracht Fran...	8	2	3	3	11	13	-2	9	DDDWL
14 Wolfsburg	8	3	0	5	9	11	-2	9	LWLWL
15 Hamburger SV	8	2	2	4	17	19	-2	8	WDLLW
16 Nürnberg	8	0	5	3	9	17	-5	5	LDDDL
17 Freiburg	8	0	4	4	9	18	-9	4	DLDLD
18 Eintracht Brau...	8	1	1	6	5	18	-13	4	WLWDL

HOLLAND		Eredivisie							
P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first	
1 Twente	9	5	3	1	22	5	+17	18	WWWD
2 PSV	9	5	3	1	21	8	+13	18	WLWDD
3 Ajax	9	5	2	2	22	13	+9	17	WWLWD
4 Feyenoord	9	5	1	3	20	15	+5	16	WWWDW
5 Heerenveen	8	4	3	1	21	16	+5	15	WDWDD
6 PEC Zwolle	9	4	3	2	14	9	+5	14	DDLLD
7 Vitesse	9	4	2	3	16	13	+3	14	LLWWD
8 Groningen	9	4	2	3	19	20	-1	14	WLWLD
9 AZ	9	4	1	4	14	16	-2	13	LWLWD
10 NAC Breda	9	3	3	3	13	10	+3	12	WDWW
11 Go Ahead Eagles	9	3	3	3	14	21	-7	12	WLDWL
12 Heracles	9	3	1	5	13	17	-4	10	LWLLW
13 Roda JC	9	2	4	3	14	19	-5	10	DDDD
14 Cambuur	9	2	3	4	7	8	-1	9	LLDWD
15 Utrecht	9	2	3	4	9	18	-9	9	LDLWD
16 ADO Den Haag	8	2	1	5	10	17	-7	7	WLDLL
17 RKC Waalwijk	9	1	2	6	12	22	-10	5	LLLLL
18 NEC	9	0	4	5	14	28	-14	4	LLDD

TURKEY		Süper Lig							
P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts	Last5games Most recent first	
1 Fenerbahçe	7	5	1	1	16	7	+9	16	DWWWW
2 Beşik									



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